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Photography began in 1839, which means there's 177 years' worth of second-hand kit out there. Even though much of it would interest only the

collectors or truly dedicated, there's still plenty of eminently usable equipment lurking in virtually every boot fair, charity shop, pawn shop, independent camera shop and eBay.

Back in my youth, names like Hasselblad,

A week in photograph

Leica and Carl Zeiss were unattainable jewels. Now these classic marques can be found for less than the cost of a decent DSLR. But the rewards of buying second-hand are greatest in the boundless variety of used lenses out there. The lens used to shoot the cover image was made before I was born and cost just £50.

I hope this issue inspires you to explore the second-hand treasures available.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

Amateur JOIN US Photographer ONLINE amateurphotographer.co.uk





Join our Flickr group at flickr.com/groups/ amateurphotographer







Running Hare by Ian Hull

Canon EOS 7D Mark II, 100-400mm, 1/500sec at f/9, ISO 640

This image by Ian Hull was uploaded to our Flickr group. 'The "Running Hare" image comes from a long-term project on one of the country's favourite wild mammals - the brown hare,' says Ian. 'I spend a lot of time from 1 March through to the late summer photographing hares. If nothing else, they are thoroughly entertaining to watch. They also happen to be a subject

that is photographed thousands of times a year, so looking for a different angle is exciting. Behind my house there is a nice straight ridge where, if you get low enough, you can achieve a clean silhouette leading to a graphic-like image. This is one of a series of shots I have captured that will hopefully, one day, lead to a pair of boxing hares on the same ridge - fingers crossed!'



Vinl Each week we choose our favourite picture on Facebook, Flickr or the reader gallery using #appicoftheweek. PermaJet proudly supports the online picture of the week winner, who will receive a top-quality print of their image on the finest PermaJet paper. It is important to bring images to life outside the digital sphere, so we encourage everyone to get printing today! Visit www.permajet.com to learn more.

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CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 19. Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 19.



NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Chris Cheesman

Beer mat photo 'first' Pub-goers combined a taste for

Pub-goers combined a taste for craft beer with an appreciation of photography at the first-ever photo exhibition printed on beer mats. Ten photographers collaborated for the exhibition held in ten pubs across Brighton, East Sussex, which was arranged by photography organisation Miniclick, earlier this month. Each image was printed on 500 beer mats.





Leica S update Leica has announced a firmware

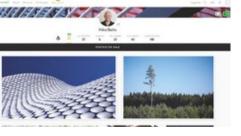
Leica has announced a firmware update for the Leica S. While the company has yet to detail the tweaks, version 3.0.0.0 also adds, for example, an automatic lens update that allows lenses with older firmware to be recognised and improved. Visit uk.leica-camera.com.

Dog Filter April Fool

Olympus has admitted its Dog Filter, an apparently new addition to its Art Filters line-up, was an April Fool's joke. In a fake press release, Olympus said the filter (a firmware update) would deliver an automatically rendered canine companion'.



Earn cash from your work



Photocrowd's new service lets members sell prints and earn a commission. Subscribers can earn 80% commission, while those who join for free earn a minimum 50% profit from each sale. Visit www.photocrowd. com/accounts/subscriptions.

Leica-lens phone revealed

A smartphone that taps into the power of Leica optical lenses has been officially unveiled by Huawei. Leica says it helped Huawei develop and optimise the dual-lens camera for the P9, the first smartphone it has co-engineered. Leica and Huawei's 'partnership

will put outstanding photography into the hands of more consumers,' said Oliver Kaltner, CEO of Leica. The P9 will be out in May, priced £449 without contract.





WEEKEND PROJECT

Shoot stormy spring skies

After a drab and grey winter, it now feels like spring, and keen-eyed photographers can take advantage of the longer days to get some great morning or evening shots when a storm is brewing. April showers are an ideal opportunity to get the best of both worlds - dramatic cloudy skies and interesting light - for producing a striking image.

You don't need lots of equipment. While lens filters can help to balance exposure, particularly the foreground with the sky, they're not essential and neither is a tripod. It's more about being able to capture the moment when it arises. Let's take a look at some things you need to consider.

The effect of a dark and ominous sky can be enhanced if there is a contrast with a lit area. Watch for those shafts of sunlight breaking through the clouds or patches of blue sky, and pay attention to where light falls.

It is also a good idea to have some directional light falling on the foreground of an image, to give a stronger sense of foreground interest. Underexposed foregrounds can look dull and flat.





BG DICTURE

Getty photographer exposes IS's destruction of historic sites

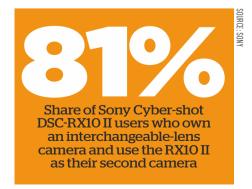
Islamic State (IS) militants have perpetrated unspeakable atrocities and have destroyed countless historic and cultural sites in the places they occupy. The group regards ancient cultural heritage sites as challenging the loyalties of Iraqi and Syrian people. Here we see a deeply affecting image of a photographer holding up a picture of the Temple of Bel, in the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra, which was taken on 14 March 2014, in front of the temple's remains after it was destroyed by IS group jihadists in September 2015. Syrian troops, backed by Russian forces, recaptured Palmyra on March 27 this year after a fierce offensive to rescue the city from jihadists who viewed the UNESCO site's magnificent ruins as idolatrous.

Words & numbers

To me a
photograph is a
page from life,
and that being
the case, it must
be real

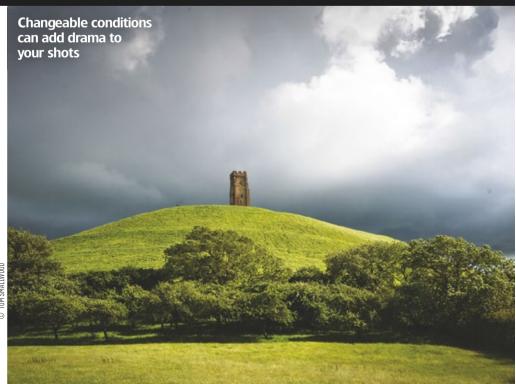
Weegee

American photographer and photojournalist (1899-1968)



Try to use a tripod; it's easier to get sharper shots at narrower apertures. If you don't have a tripod, use a lens with image stabilisation and pick a fast enough shutter speed to avoid softness.

If you don't have a lens filter, you can get a similar effect using software, such as Lightroom's Graduated Filter tool. Don't overdo it, though, and don't create excessive noise when fixing underexposure.







Hasselblad consigns CSC venture to history

THE HASSELBLAD Lunar was such a secret camera that phones were banned at meetings and designers were not allowed to mention it in emails.

Yet the compact system camera, which was developed in a tie-up with Sony and codenamed 'Pink', has been officially axed fewer than four years after its publicity-fuelled debut at the Photokina trade fair in Cologne, Germany.

The move to ditch the Lunar came as the Swedish medium-format giant revealed plans to target the 'prosumer' market, and avoid 'bling cameras'.

Despite being consigned to photographic history, in an interview with AP, current Hasselblad CEO Perry Oosting insisted that, at the time, the Lunar strategy was the correct one.

Oosting, who became CEO in 2015, confirmed what many may have guessed – that the Lunar has been discontinued.

Oosting told AP: 'Last year we sold the last ones. Everything is sold... and there is nothing planned.'

But he added: '[In] those days... it was the right strategy to [develop] a wider segmentation audience for Hasselblad. It was absolutely the right thing to do.'

Launched onto the market in 2013, the Hasselblad Lunar camera didn't come cheap, costing £5,280 with a lens.

Asked what was wrong with

the Lunar, Oosting replied: 'There was nothing wrong with the Lunar camera, or with the Stellar [a compact camera launched in 2013 and also discontinued]. These were great cameras. The thing is, we see the value proposition that we will deliver going forward as different.'

Despite the Lunar's unceremonious demise, the current CEO was loath to blame previous incumbents for the project.

'Please, I don't want to be the one [saying]: "Look what they did, and so on", so please do not write that... I want to be respectful – it was a different time, a different approach. It is always easy to say [things] in hindsight. You have many CEOs joining a company, and you know what is the first thing they do? Blame the other guy from the past.'

'No, we need to look at the future. We need to build on the foundation we have.'

Oosting was reluctant to divulge details of future products in the pipeline.

'Let us under-promise and over-deliver, instead of over-promise and under-deliver.'

On thing is clear – there are no more Lunar models looming on the horizon.

More from this interview with Perry Oosting will appear in a future issue of AP.



Lee Filters extends ND line-up

LEE FILTERS has extended its neutraldensity graduated filter range for the Seven5 (designed for CSCs), 100mm (for DSLRs and medium/large format), and SW150 (designed for ultrawideangle lenses) systems.

'The medium and very hard grads allow for even more exact control,' says Lee Filters, which, in the past, custom-made these filters for professional photographers.

The very hard grad (available for the 100mm and SW150 systems) is perfect for seascapes that feature a 'completely flat horizon line', while the medium grad (compatible with Seven5, 100mm and SW150 systems) delivers 'in-between' strength that is ideal for 'any scene in which an element of the composition protrudes into the sky'.

Visit www.leefilters.com.



Visit amateurphotographer subs.co.uk/15W (or see p48) * when you pay by UK Direct Debit





Hasselblad unveils 100MP camera

HASSELBLAD has launched a 100-million-pixel medium-format camera, the H6D-100c, featuring a Sony sensor and 4K video, following feedback from photographers.

Key features also include a top ISO of 12.800 and a 3in. 920,000-dot rear touchscreen that allows users to, for example, pinch zoom and swipe like they would a smartphone, and obtain 'pin-sharp' live view.

There will also be a 50MP version - the H6D-50c – which, like its 100MP sibling, features a 1/2000sec shutter speed and built-in Wi-Fi.

The 50MP model includes full HD video instead of the 4K on the H6D-100c.

The 100MP camera has a 53.4x40mm image sensor, which is slightly larger than that of the H6D-50c, and boasts 16-bit colour depth for a dynamic range of '15 stops'.

Both models feature a USB 3.0 connector that is designed to speed up image transfer from camera to computer.

Hasselblad CEO Perry

Oosting said commercial photographers had requested video, so a separate video camera is not needed during shoots. However, he stressed that the H6D is built for shooting stills.

The H6D cameras due to ship to dealers this month – are also equipped with dual card slots, for CFast and SD. This will allow users to keep one card for JPEGs and the other for raw files, for example, as well as helping to maximise their storage capacity.

The H6D-100c is due to cost £27,120.

Get up & go

The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Tom Smallwood



Britain revealed by international artists Curated by Martin Parr, this exhibition at the Barbican features

23 photographers from overseas who've been inspired by the UK, including Robert Frank and Cartier-Bresson. Contemporary artists include Bruce Gilden, who hit the streets of London to take some characteristically detailed close-ups. The exhibition will also remind Brits how much the UK has changed over the past 80 years. Until 19 June, www.barbican.org.uk/news/artformnews



Paul Strand retrospective

Photography and Film for the 20th Century is a retrospective of the work of Paul Strand, the US photographer and filmmaker, and the first in the UK since his death in 1976. The show features around 200 objects spanning Strand's career.

Until 3 July, www.vam.ac.uk

the drama of a stormy sky,

Landscape photography



WPOTY

Your last chance to see images by finalists of Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2015, at the National Museum Cardiff. The exhibition features 100 shortlisted images and is on loan from the Natural History Museum in London.

Until 24 April. museumwales. ac.uk/cardiff/whatson

Amateurs star at Sony photo shoot-out

PHOTOGRAPHY enthusiasts have played a starring role at the Sony World Photography Awards, which has revealed winners of the Open and Youth categories.

The winning shots – plucked from more than 100,000 entries - included one by a Briton, Alex Ingle from Edinburah.

A Sony World Photography Awards spokesperson said: 'The scale of competition faced by each of the 13 winners was incredible, even more so as many of the winners are simply photography enthusiasts, not



professionals in the industry.

'The winners are from around the world and the youngest [Anais Stupka from Italy] is just 12 years old."

The Open category saw entries from photographers of all abilities, while the Youth section sought images by people aged 12-19 years.

See AP 7 May, where we feature all the winners from the Open category. Seldom seen images

30 April, www.rps.org/events

Landscape photographer John Eastwood goes beyond the everyday and familiar to the seldom seen in this exhibition of images from

Tony Worobiec reveals how to get good images in less than ideal

the north west, on show at Stockport Art Gallery. It features 26 photos by Eastwood, taken using only natural light.

Until 29 April, www. photolandscape.co.uk





For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk



Panasonic Lumix
DMC-GX80

Pop-up flash
There's a tiny built-in

Andy Westlake takes a look at **Panasonic's** new mid-range compact system camera

At a glance

- 16-million-pixel Four Thirds sensor, no optical low-pass filter
- ISO 200-25,600 (ISO 100-25,600 extended)
- Dual IS: 5-axis in-body stabilisation working with 2-axis in-lens
- 4K video recording and 4K Photo mode
- 2.76-million-dot EVF (16:9 aspect ratio)
- 1.04-million-dot 3in tilting touchscreen
- New low-vibration shutter: 60secs1/4000sec (1sec1/16000sec electronic)
- £509 body only, £599 with 12-32mm f/3.5-5.6 lens

Stereo microphone

Dual mics record sound during video recording, but there's no socket for an external unit.

Aspect Ratio

Picture Size



Built-in Wi-Fi

from a smartphone or tablet and sharing of images.

PANASONIC was the first company

to make a compact system camera

in the form of the Lumix DMC-G1 in

experimented with a range of body

essentially the same template as the

popular GX7 from 2013, making a

compact rangefinder-style body with

a tilting screen and built-in EVF. There

are a few omissions – for example, the EVF is fixed rather than tilting – but in

exchange you get all of Panasonic's latest

and greatest technology, most notably a

in-body image stabilisation with 2-axis

new dual IS system that combines 5-axis

designs and sizes. With the new

mid-range GX80, it has revisited

2008, and since then it has

This allows remote control

optical IS when using suitably equipped lenses. This being Panasonic, there's also 4K video recording and its associated 4K Photo mode for extracting 8MP stills from 30fps 4K footage.

RAW

The GX80 will be available from early May for £509 body only, £599 with the 12–32mm f/3.5–5.6 OIS pancake zoom, or £729 in a dual–lens kit adding the compact 35–100mm f/4–5.6 OIS telezoom. Three colour options will be on offer: all black, silver and black, and silver and brown.

Features

The GX80 has a pretty solid feature set, although there is nothing much that's

USB charging
The DMW-BLG10E battery is
charged using the camera's

charged using the camera's Micro USB socket.

flash with a hotshoe alongside it.

clearly new. It uses the familiar 16-million-pixel MOS sensor that's in most of Panasonic's Micro Four Thirds cameras. However, for the first time, the firm has removed the optical low-pass filter, which should eke out a little more resolution. The sensitivity range is now ISO 200-25,600 as standard, with an extended ISO 100 option.

Autofocus uses Panasonic's Depth From Defocus technology, which uses knowledge of the lens's optical characteristics when the image is out of focus to determine how to achieve correct focus. The GX80 is capable of continuous shooting at 8fps at full resolution; if you want it to refocus



Panasonic's new GX80 combines 5-axis in-body stabilisation with 4K video recording

between frames, the speed drops to a still-impressive 6fps. Switch to 4K Photo mode and you can shoot at fully 30fps then easily extract 8MP stills from the footage – a feature none of its direct competitors can match.

Panasonic has also included an all-new shutter mechanism in the GX80. This uses an electromagnetic drive with two solenoids operating the shutter curtains, which is said to reduce shutter-related vibrations by 90% and cut operational noise as well. In use, the GX80's new shutter operates with a quiet, discreet snick and certainly feels much 'softer'. If this isn't enough, a silent and shock-free electronic shutter is also on hand offering speeds of up to 1/16000sec.

Perhaps the biggest news is that the GX80 packs Panasonic's latest Dual IS system. Like the GX8 before it, the camera can use both in-lens and in-body IS together for better results. However, the GX80 now offers five axes of in-body correction, including for rotation around the lens axis, which tends to be important for long exposures. Our initial impression is that the GX80's IS system works very well for both stills and video recording.

Build and handling

In-hand, the GX80 feels very nicely made and quite heavy for its size. The

handgrip is just large enough to wrap your fingers around, with a well-defined space to place your thumb. The control layout perhaps isn't the best you'll find, but it's logical enough and works reasonably well out of the box.

Many of the controls are user configurable, including the twin command dials, four external Fn buttons, and five on-screen function buttons. Panasonic's menus are relatively well organised and logical, so it's not too difficult to find your way around the camera and set it up how you want.

Viewfinder and screen

Broadly speaking, the GX80 uses the same viewfinder and screen as the older GX7, with the main difference being that the EVF is fixed. Without having to fit in a tilt mechanism, the camera is noticeably more compact – most obviously, the viewfinder eyecup doesn't stick as far out the back of the camera. The 2.76-million-dot panel has a 16:9 aspect ratio, which gives an impressive widescreen view for video recording but a somewhat smaller view when shooting stills in the 4:3 ratio. Meanwhile, the rear screen is a 1.04-million-dot touchscreen that tilts 80° up and 45° downwards. This is really useful for shooting video or stills, either at waist level or overhead.

First impressions

WITH the GX80, Panasonic has made a camera that feels much more like the GX7's spiritual successor than the GX8 ever did – impressive as that camera undoubtedly is. Similar in size, design and layout to the GX7, it also comes to market at an attractive price. Considering its sophisticated dual image stabilisation and 4K video recording, it looks like a compelling option for enthusiast photographers who are also interested in exploring the creative opportunities afforded by movie making.

In terms of design and styling, the GX80 isn't as charismatic as many of its direct competitors, but despite this, my initial impression is that it's Panasonic's best-judged CSC design for some time. It's competing in a very strong area of the market, but has enough distinguishing features to stand out and hold its own.

Metz updates pocket-sized flash

METZ is poised to launch a new compact flash unit designed to be small enough to carry in a shirt pocket.

The Metz mecablitz 26 AF-2 carries a guide number of 26m at ISO 100 and covers a focal length of 85mm with the included telephoto diffuser.

Features include a wideangle diffuser (24mm) and an adjustable LED video light.

The flash unit comes with a stand, so it can be positioned away from the camera.

It will be compatible with software updates via a USB interface.

The Metz mecablitz 26 AF-2 will cost £109.99.

The new Metz mecablitz AF-2 replaces the 26 AF-1





Your best pet photos sought

THE 'CUTEST and quirkiest' photos of pets at home are being sought.

Vouchers worth £500 are up for grabs to the winner of the Pets Make A Home contest. Organised by house builder



Taylor Wimpey, the contest will give the public the chance to vote for their favourite shots. Last year's competition pulled in more than 4,000 photos and garnered over 60,000 votes.

Images can be submitted via www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/pets; by posting photos on Twitter; on Instagram, using the hashtag #TWPetsMakeAHome; via the Taylor Wimpey Facebook page; or by emailing pets@ taylorwimpey.com. Rules state that although copyright remains with the photographer, entries may be used for Taylor Wimpey promotional material.



Viewpoint Jon Bentley

Their resolution may be poor, but the latest virtual-reality headsets, such as the Oculus Rift and HTC Vive, promise to boost the appeal of 360° photography

t's taken me a while, but at last I'm starting to get excited about 360° photography. The reason for my new enthusiasm is that I've been trying out the latest virtual-reality headsets. They make it so much easier and more satisfying to consume 360° content.

Put on the likes of the Oculus Rift and, even better, the HTC Vive, and looking around what immediately feels like a virtual world, is a new and exciting experience. It's much more engaging than scrabbling round a 360° picture using a mouse on a computer screen.

With your headset on, you start to see the virtual-reality potential of a 360° still or video sequence, putting you at the centre of the subject, whether it's racetrack action or a seat at a prize-giving ceremony.

Choosing your subject

You also begin to appreciate how important the photographer is to making your 360° experience a success. You might think you're taking over some of the photographer's decisions – doing your own framing and, to some extent, selecting your point of view. However, factors such as camera positioning, timing and exposure are arguably more important than ever.

The selection of an appropriate subject and its correct treatment are vital, too. Extreme sports may still be the default option for makers of 360° videos, as the wealth of material featuring the likes of skateboarding, motor racing and cross-country cycling will testify. However, great architecture, abandoned buildings, beaches and cityscapes are also equally suited to the virtual-reality treatment.

In video, I've found the most challenging and satisfying 360° work puts you at the heart of a scene in a drama or music concert. Even people can work as

See the world through the Oculus Rift subjects, although I suspect an environmental portrait is likely to be more illuminating in this format than a candid or glamour one.

Before I get too carried away, though, virtual reality still has quite a way to go. At the moment, the resolution offered by even the most advanced headsets is poor. The controls available on the more affordable 360° cameras are crude. The set-up and additional equipment required can be off-putting. For example, clearing space in your room for the HTC Vive's movement detecting base stations can be quite a chore.

However, as with any new technology, the quality will improve and the kit be easier to use. I predict that in the very near future a growing number of photographers will try 360° picture—making as part of their creative repertoire.

Jon Bentley is a TV producer and presenter best known for *Top Gear* and Channel 5's *The Gadget Show*



Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 19 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

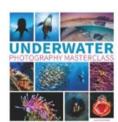
New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



Underwater Photography Masterclass

By Alex Mustard, Ammonite Press, £19.99, 192 pages, paperback, ISBN 978-1-78145-222-6



DR ALEX Mustard is a photographer we've featured before, either through dedicated features or by inclusion of one of his many stunning images in global photography competitions. There's a reason he's so prevalent – he

shows us a world many of us would never otherwise experience. Taken in the depths of the ocean, Mustard's images are full of creatures and flora that seem almost alien. Patterns and colour abound, and it's through the lens of his camera that we are allowed to bear witness. In this great handbook, Mustard takes readers on a detailed tour of how exactly they can enter into the world of underwater photography. Subjects range from diving equipment to lighting techniques, and macro advice to camera gear. Basically, it's everything you could wish to know.

.....

Family Photography Now

By Sophie Howarth and Stephen McLaren, Thames & Hudson, £29.95, 240 pages, hardback, ISBN 978-0-50054-453-2



OUR NOTION of the family is an idea that is undergoing a radical rethink. Our more enlightened times dictate that we can no longer see family as simply a mother, a father and their children. It's a

concept that is fluid and malleable, often vastly different from home to home. This book collects the work of 40 international image–makers and explores the ways in which each of them has tackled the dynamics of family life. It's fascinating to see how the family unit can microcosmically come to represent the cultural and political make–up of a society. The works themselves range from highly personal albums to stylised portraits, and each approach has something very valuable to bring to the debate of just what it means to be a member of a family, or in some cases what it means to lack such a thing.





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Our Price £729.00 or pay £20.45 per month

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Our Price £2499.00 or pay £71.25 per month

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Technique oldlenses

Matt Osborne explains how the raft of often-overlooked old lenses available today can open up a world of possibilities with your current gear

ave you ever lingered at the window of your local camera shop, or spent an unhealthy amount of time on the cameras section of eBay, and wondered if it's possible to use all the many weird and wonderful old lenses with your modern-day digital camera?

Well, the good news is you can – so long as you follow two basic rules. First, the sensor size of the camera you want to mount the vintage lens to must be equal to, or smaller than, the sensor size (or camera format) of the camera for which the lens was originally made. Second, the distance between the lens and the camera sensor (the flange distance) must be equal to, or greater than, the distance between the lens and the camera sensor on the original camera.





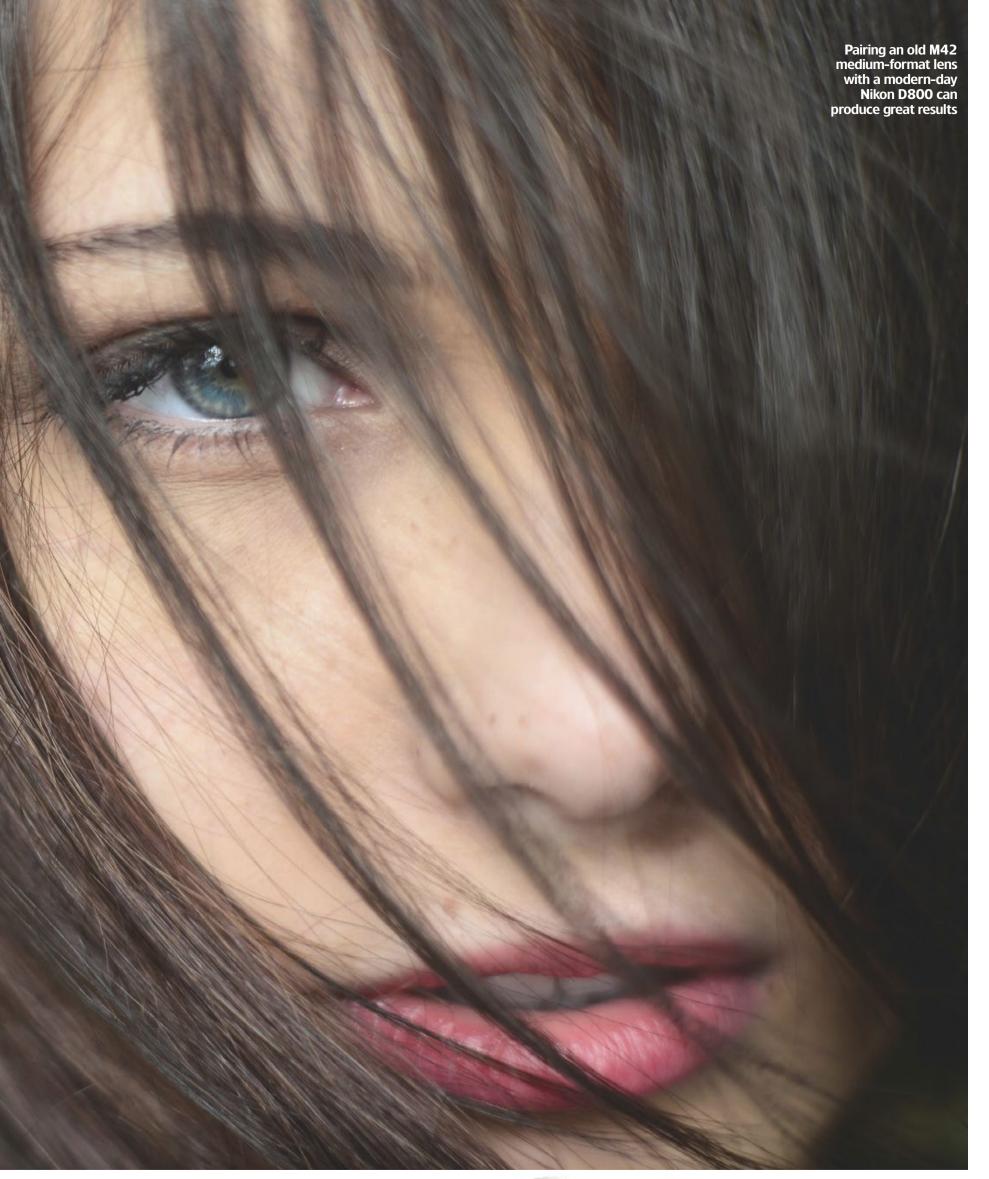
Matt Osborne

Matt's photographic career began in 2008, after he was given a Panasonic Lumix DMC-TZ5 for Christmas. Eight years later, he is now a wedding and model photographer. Completely self-taught, he enjoys using a range of kit from Leica M3s to a 1947 Pacemaker Speed Graphic and Sinar F2. www.mrleica.com



■M42 adapter

Very affordable and with a raft of options available for various mounts, this is a great adapter to get started with.





■ P6 tilt-shift adapter
While you can get standard P6 adapters, there are some tilt-shift options available from the likes of Arax.



Carl Zeiss Jena Available in a range of mounts including P6 and M42 options, these are not budget vintage lenses but are definitely worth looking at.







Options

Most mirrorless cameras have the lens mount closer to the sensor since there's no mirror to take up additional space, so they obey rule two. As the majority either feature APS-C or Four Thirds sensors, they also follow rule one, making them a great option for shooting with vintage lenses.

If you've got a DSLR, it's easy to be tempted to buy classic 35mm optics. However, don't forget the medium-format lenses, or even large-format lenses for that matter, as they can all be used on any DSLR or mirrorless camera. As a result, the opportunities to use old lenses on such cameras are almost endless.

Starting out

I discovered this world of vintage lenses when I was new to photography and using a Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1 Micro Four Thirds mirrorless camera. I was researching photos I liked on Flickr, and then seeing what lens the photographer used to help achieve the look of his shot.

It wasn't long before I ditched my 14-42mm kit lens and switched to a Leica-mount Voigtländer Nokton 40mm f/1.4 lens via an adapter. The results blew me away and made me look at other manual-focus lenses on eBay. I discovered they could be bought for a fraction of the price of the Lumix lenses that were designed for the camera. At the same time, they were teaching me photography. I became familiar with terms such as 'aperture' and 'shutter speed', and shot everything in manual mode.

Adapters

As I've briefly mentioned, the primary means of attaching an old lens to your modern DSLR or mirrorless camera is a lens adapter. The majority will fit most



lenses to most cameras, assuming they conform to the rules mentioned previously. Visit your local dealer or search online for your camera and the make or mount of the old lens you wish to use with it, and you should find something suitable.

The adapter allows you to mount the lens to the camera body as if it were a modern lens designed for that camera. The main difference is that, typically, there is no electrical contact, so you'll have neither AF nor EXIF data. Metering should still be possible in most cases, though.

Along with standard adapters, tilt-shift lens adapters are also available. For example, a tilt-shift adapter made by Arax allows you to mount Pentacon Six (P6 mount) medium-format lenses on a DSLR.

This is not forgetting that some old lenses can be used on DSLR cameras with only part-functionality. For example, M42-mount lenses can be used on a Nikon DSLR using an M42 adapter. However, the lens cannot be focused to infinity – you risk the rear of the lens hitting your camera's mirror when you fire the shutter. While this might be an issue for some, such a set-up has its advantages. M42 lenses can focus closer than they were originally designed to when mounted on a DSLR, creating a pleasingly shallow depth of field. There are a wealth of M42 lenses out there. My choice is the Carl Zeiss Jena range, but it's also worth noting that M42 lenses can be used on mirrorless cameras without any restrictions.

Journey of discovery

I purchased various low-cost legacy lenses on eBay – some better than others – by manufacturers including Olympus Zuiko and Vivitar. After a year I changed from a Lumix G1 to a Nikon DSLR and remember the biggest disappointment being that I was unable to use my



favourite Voigtländer lens on the Nikon, owing to the restrictions outlined earlier.

I then bought some M42-mount lenses to use on my Nikon D800, but as mentioned, without infinity focus. Next, I started my journey into film photography and was buying Russian medium-format film cameras such as the Kiev 88 and Pentacon Six. This introduced me to a new world of medium-format lenses and I began using these legacy lenses on my D800.

No matter what camera or budget you have, with a bit of time and research you'll be able to find a vintage legacy lens that will give a unique look to your photographs that modern lenses simply can't replicate.

Right: Mirrorless cameras are one option, as seen in this image shot on a Panasonic Lumix DMC-G3





Freelensing

You don't need an adapter to shoot with vintage lenses.

AS THE name suggests, freelensing is exactly what it says – the lens is handheld in front of the camera body, aligning roughly to where it would normally be mounted to the camera. It can be done with any DSLR or mirrorless camera, and any lens that follows the two basic rules outlined previously can produce some beautiful, creamy, defocused effects that can be difficult to replicate elsewhere.

First, to shoot with a lens removed from your camera, the lens must be held at the same plane to the camera body as if it were mounted, giving a similar look to any other standard photo.

If the lens you're using would normally require a very thin lens adapter, such as an M42-mount lens, then it's less easy to freelens, as the lens must be held up to the camera body. It's a similar story if the lens is the same make as the camera, such as an old Nikkor AI lens on a Nikon DSLR, since again, the lens needs to be held almost touching the camera body to achieve a shot.

If the lens would normally require a deeper lens adapter, then it will need to be held at roughly the same distance from the camera body to get a standard-looking photo. Therefore, if the lens adapter you'd normally use is one-inch deep, the lens must be held at the same distance from the camera body to give the same look to the image.

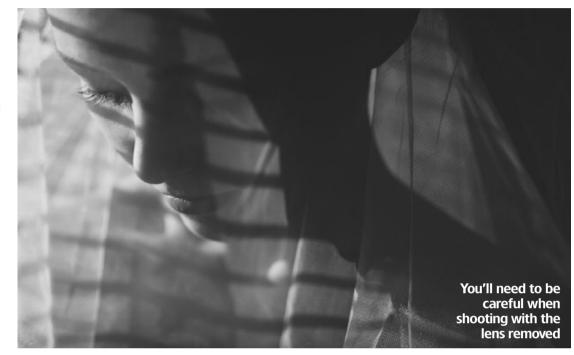
Getting creative

Probably the most common reason for freelensing is the ability to tilt the lens to a different plane from that of the camera sensor, thereby creating the common tilt-shift look with part of an image in focus and part of it out of focus.

This works by tilting the lens no more than a few millimetres from the lens mount. Tilting the lens to the right will mean the left side of the frame retains focus, while tilting it downwards will mean the top area retains focus, and so on. Get it right and it can produce some fantastic results.



You can shoot with the lens pressed right against the lens mount for more traditional results



Overcoming problems

IT GOES without saying that light leaks can be a problem, as the lens is tilted away from the camera body. Try to cup the lens from the side from which the light is coming to avoid this. However, there are times when it's best not to fight it, since light leaks can lend a lovely retro look to

your images. It's a case of making sure you don't overdo things.

With the sensor exposed, the risk of dust increases greatly. Try to limit the length of time that the sensor is exposed, and avoid placing the camera in areas that are likely to be dusty.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



1Settings

Before you detach your lens, set your camera's drive mode to continuous, to boost your chances of success. Dial in the exposure you'll need once the lens has been removed, using the maximum aperture of the lens. With the camera set up to shoot raw, detach the lens.



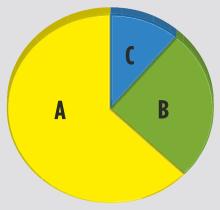
2 Shooting

Set focus to infinity – it's easier to move the lens rather than try to adjust the focus with one hand. There's a lot of trial and error, so don't be disheartened if it doesn't work at first. Very gentle movements are key here; the more you tilt the lens, the more blur you'll get.



3 Practice

You may prefer to shoot through the viewfinder, but with focusing being tricky you may want to use the larger rear screen. Don't be afraid to shoot a burst of shots, either, as you're more likely to get one that's in focus. You'll be amazed by what tiny movements of the lens can do.



In AP 2 April we asked...

As a photographer, do you consider yourself to be an artist?

You answered

A Yes	63%
B No	26%
C I'm not sure	11%

What you said

'Not every photograph I take is an artwork, nor is every photographer necessarily an artist, any more than a house painter is Picasso, but a photograph can certainly be art and I strive to make some that are. Photography isn't the only art form I practise (I'm also an engraver/printmaker and painter) and photography is no less demanding of technical skill, creativity, imagination and originality.'

'No. I just think that I'm still in a process, not necessarily an educational one, of working out who I am and what I want to say. I don't know that I'll ever feel comfortable with a label like "artist", but it doesn't devalue what I try to do.'

'Of course. Why should I be any less of an artist than the person who uses pig bristles tied to a stick, or a hammer and chisel? As to whether I'm a good artist, well, that's another question.'

'Sometimes I try to be. Other times I try to be a recorder of images. Sometimes, if I'm lucky, some people seem to like some of the pictures I make.'

This week we ask...

How much would you spend on a second-hand lens?

Vote online www.amateurphotographer.co.uk



Promenade © Lee Acaster

Another great image from AP contributor Lee Acaster. This striking black & white shot was taken in Brightlingsea, Essex.



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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Feature suggestion

Photography is built on scores of fond memories, events and those things in life that leave a lasting impression. Uncovering some of the countless snippets and gems would make an ideal, and probably popular, AP column titled 'Remembering when...'. Readers could make a massive contribution through their recalls and points of view, in a maximum of 50 words.

Topics could be free ranging, from their time with a first camera, pictures captured or missed, and calamities. In my case, I remember when, at a friend's wedding, my camera's catch snapped and an elastic band was needed as an emergency fix to keep the film from fogging up. And when a colleague ventured too far at a riverside before falling over comically when the deep

mud took hold. He was still holding aloft his new pride and joy, a Pentax 35mm SLR. Pride gone, but camera saved.

And finally, the look of surprise when my first roll of film was collected from the local processing chemists, and all 12 shots were successful. Result!

ffivesix, Staffordshire

Thanks for the great suggestion.
The success of a column such as this depends entirely on whether people keep sending them in every week, so let us see what response we get to your idea. If any readers have short anecdotes they'd like to share with us, do send them in and we'll see if we can get enough to kick-start the feature – Nigel Atherton, Editor



With Ultra High Speed performance, the waterproof Samsung 32GB EVO Micro SDHC card, Class 10, Grade 1, offers up to 48MB/sec transfer speed.

SAMS UNG

Amateur interests

How much interest does an 'amateur' reader have in a camera costing £36,000 (Phase One XF with IQ3 back, AP 9 April)? Interest in the latest advances in technology may justify a whole page at most, but surely not six pages. **Bill Ward, Glasgow**

I'm sorry you didn't enjoy **Damien Demolder's article** on the Phase One XF with IQ3 100MP back. We always think hard about how to cover cameras like this that are at the forefront of technology. but cost as much as a family car. However, in this case, we felt that while few of our readers will buy a **£36,000** camera, the chances are that wellheeled amateurs will be able to afford cameras with 100MP in just a few years' time. After all, 42MP and

50MP cameras are available for less than £3,000 now, and we know Canon has a 120MP camera in the works. The aim was to give readers a flavour of what it's like to work with the kind of ultra-high resolutions some of them could be using in the not-too-distant future.

– Andy Westlake,

could be using in the not-too-distant future.

- Andy Westlake, technical editor

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The Phase One XF and IQ3 100MP back costs £36,000

Card failure

A few days after starting my holiday, I got the dreaded 'card cannot be accessed' message on my Canon EOS 5D Mark III. It was a new 128GB SDXC card, formatted in the camera. I tried switching off, removing and reinserting the card before turning the camera on again, but it still could not access the card. PhotoRec software could not retrieve any images from the card and my MacBook Pro did not register as a device when inserted in the slot. It had no trouble with other cards of the same type.

Checking on the internet, I found that others have had the same problem with both CF and SD cards. My photos may be lost, but could you tell me why

this occurs and how to prevent it in the future?





As it was a new card, should I have tried 'filling it up' before my holiday to try it out? Does it happen to old cards that have been used before? Are some makes, types or sizes more prone than others? Is there a way to find out whether a card may be at risk of becoming inaccessible mid-shoot, or should those of us whose cameras allow it, be saving our images to two cards simultaneously?

Peter Slessenger, **Berkshire**

CONTENT FOR NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Card failures seem to be rare and unpredictable not that this is any consolation if you suffer one. I've used an awful lot of cards and had very few problems, especially with reputable brands such as SanDisk and Lexar. Perhaps our readers could share any experiences they've had with losing

images to a bad memory card - Andy Westlake, technical editor

Mistaken identity?

I just read Roger Hicks's Final Analysis on 'Ship Shape, 1945', by Weegee (AP 2 April). He says the people peering out through the portholes are the makers of the ship. To me, it looks as if they are military personnel, possibly coming home or going abroad. They all have young faces and seem to have badges on their shoulders. They also seem overjoyed – just like me when I returned.

Mr Green, Essex

Black & white dilemma

Thank you for the excellent article 'Lightroom Landscapes', (AP 2 April). Out-of-camera landscape shots rarely match the delight of the view that inspired them, and I am often at a loss as

to how to process them to recapture the magic. I consider the sections in your article by Lee Ancaster and Damian Shields among the most useful photographic advice I have read.

Singling out these two is not meant to be a criticism of the others, but I hardly ever consider converting a photo to black & white to be an improvement. I would prefer a square crop of Mark Littlejohn's 'before' photo to his 'after'. I would also regret losing the subtle colours in Steve Gosling's 'before' image. His 'after' shot (above right) does show the detail of the ice on the loch, but I'm not sure how much of the credit for this should go to the black & white conversion, how much to other editing changes, and how much to being printed in a larger size.

Chris Newman (Mr), **Hertfordshire**

Contact

Amateur Photographer, Time Inc (UK) Ltd, Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7BF **Telephone** 0203 148 4138

Email amateurphotographer@timeinc.com Picture returns: telephone 0203 148 4121 **Email** appicturedesk@timeinc.com

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Shoot wildlife in extreme weather

Embrace the bad weather and discover how to get more dramatic wildlife shots



Tall tales

Shoot your landscapes in portrait mode for a fresh approach

Leica X-U

Michael Topham field tests the new Leica waterproof compact camera with the RNLI

APOY results round 1

Find out who won a great Sigma prize in our Abstracts round





Backtobasics

Andrew Sydenham and Phil Hall dust down some old kit as they reacquaint themselves with the delights of shooting with a range of classic cameras

hese days, even the most affordable DSLRs and mirrorless cameras offer a wealth of sophisticated technology. Not only does this make life that much easier for the photographer, but it also means these cameras, along with the latest lens designs, are capable of delivering images that are incredibly rich in detail. As a result, it's easy to forget the trials and tribulations some of us had to go through when shooting film, or more specifically, with film cameras.

With this is mind, we thought we'd bring together some of the film cameras that have made their way into the hands of the AP team over the years and see what it's like to shoot with them now in a studio environment. To add to the challenge, we wanted to see whether we could get a shot that would be good enough for the front cover.

Hasselblad 500C/M Andrew Sydenham

About the Hasselblad 500C/M

This Hasselblad system camera was born in 1957. The 500 series is renowned for its excellent optics, sturdiness, reliability and compact size, and it has only recently been ousted as the professional camera of choice by the advent of Canon and Nikon DSLRs. Almost everything is interchangeable – lenses, prism/viewfinder, film-winding knob and film back - which makes it an extremely flexible system. The square 6x6cm format on 120 rollfilm makes the most of the image circle from the lens and means you don't have to turn the camera sideways for portrait photographs.

An old friend

When I unearthed my Hasselblad 500C/M and associated kit from its rather sumptuous fitted case, it was like greeting an old friend returning from overseas. I'm embarrassed to

say I haven't used this beautiful camera for many years. The first thing I noticed was the plethora of yellow Hasselblad service stickers adorning every available surface.

Although there are no batteries or electronics to worry about, the sophisticated traditional engineering needs regular attention to keep everything on track, one of the few things that hasn't changed radically with the advent of the digital age.

The Hasselblad 500C/M, with its stunning good looks and gorgeously vintage aesthetics, is still a very sought-after camera. With its look-down-style viewing screen and a lovely hand crank on the side to advance your film, it's an absolute delight to use. The original design targeted professional photographers, and vintage prices clearly reflect that. After all, the company has often been deemed the Rolls-Royce of cameras.





The optics and image quality rank among the very best, and many photographers rely on the 500C/M today, as there is a range of digital backs available that complements the film-back options.

Before I switched to digital capture, I would shoot numerous Polaroid test shots to fine tune the lighting and check that every aspect of the shot was perfect before exposing a single frame on a roll of film. Not having that luxury any more, I admit to testing the set-up with some digital shots on the tethered Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III to assure myself everything was on track before lifting the film camera.

The workflow is distinctly slower. Manual focusing on the ground-glass screen required brighter modelling lights than I'd grown used to with fast lenses on DSLRs, and I found I was

Below: There's no getting away from the fact that the 500C/M is a lovely-looking piece of kit

continually checking and rechecking the focus as I progressed through the 12 exposures. Every shot has to count – the throwaway digital approach could end up being very expensive when you consider the add-on cost of processing and scanning to the already substantial film bill.

The slower pace and look-down viewfinder make for a more direct relationship with the model.

Directing and posing are inevitably slower, but they are also a refreshing

experience that is rewarding. The limitations of film force you to slow down your creative process, but this is part of the real joy of shooting with film.



THE CANON Canonet QL19, produced in 1965, is a very well-built compact rangefinder camera, and the 45mm f/1.9 lens can create wonderfully sharp images with excellent contrast. There is a selenium photocell meter mounted on the front of the lens and the Canon QL quick film-loading system simplifies film loading. Canonet was a very strongselling series and good examples are fairly easy to find. For street photographers keen to shoot film, this is still a great option.

Film and processing

THE CHOICE of available film stock is now much reduced, with manufacturers dropping once popular lines and formats. For maximum versatility and exposure latitude, we opted to shoot colour negative film and managed to acquire Fujicolor Pro 160NS 120 film and some rolls of Fujicolor Pro 400H 35mm from Silverprint (www.silverprint.co.uk).

Once the shoot was completed, films were sent off to Metro Imaging (www.metroimaging.co.uk) for developing and scanning to CD.

Andrew says

The Canonet is a pleasure to use. It's compact, although not light, and the 45mm lens is good as a standard for street photography but rather short for portraits and studio work. The shutter is incredibly quiet and vibration free, and the rangefinder is bright and simple to focus. Accurate framing, however, will be an issue if you're used to an SLR or DSLR camera.

Pentax Spotmatic SP with 50mm f/1.4

FIRST released by Asahi back in 1964 and built like a titanium Swiss watch, the Pentax Spotmatic SP is a great performer. It does have an odd metering system which requires the aperture to be stopped down to get a proper reading. It goes without saying that it takes a bit of getting used to, but is very functional once mastered. The lenses for this camera are M42 Pentax screw-mount, which are very easy to find and really cheap, as many brands over the years made lenses in this mount. This is the predecessor to the Pentax K1000, the mainstay of college photography students the world over.

Andrew says

It's difficult not to be overcome by the sheer beauty and weight of this camera when you shoot with it, which gives the feeling that it's been hewn from a block of titanium. It sits in the hand as well as any SLR ever made and is only pipped at the post by the iconic Nikon F as an outright looker.

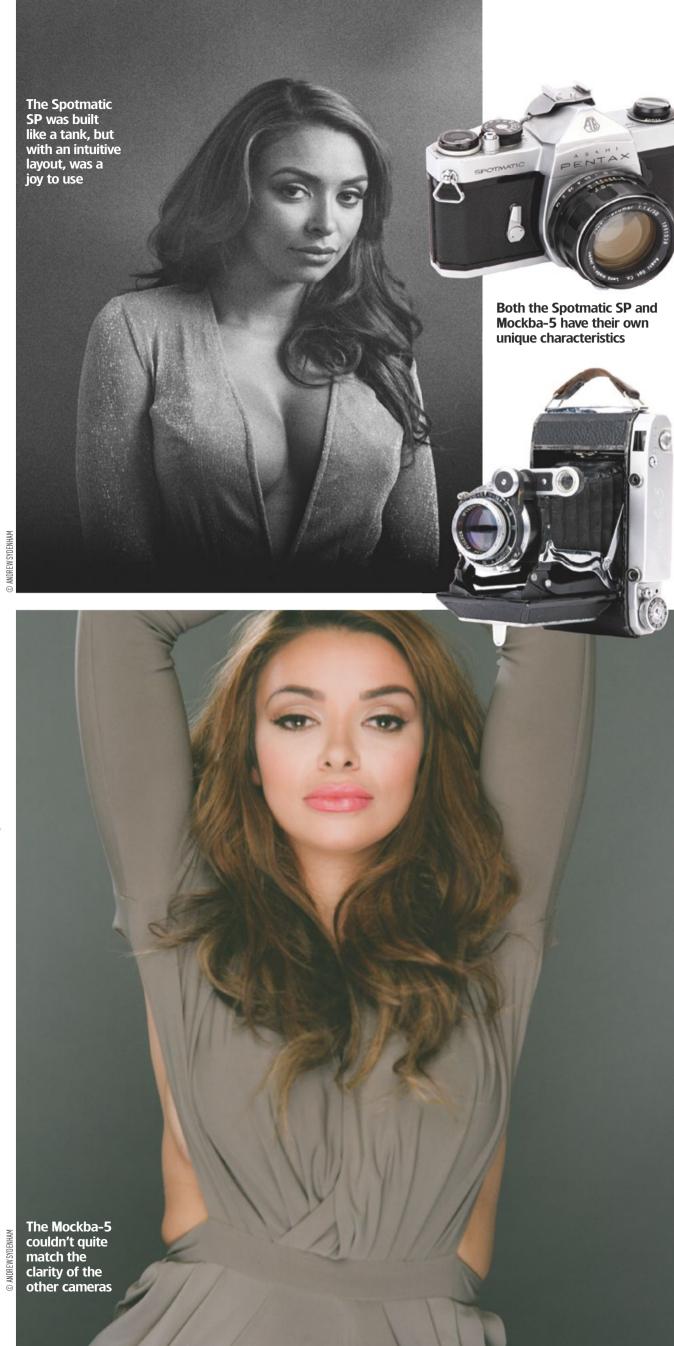
The classic control layout is an intuitive pleasure and, when combined with the legendary 50mm f/1.4 Super-Takumar lens, I felt very confident of a great result.

Mockba-5 (Moskva-5)

THE MOCKBA-5 is a 120-film Russian camera from the late 1950s, with the option to shoot 6x9cm images along with 6x6cm if the mask is employed. It is a virtual copy of the wonderful Zeiss Ikon Ikonta C. Its ability to fold up makes the Mockba-5 more practical than the huge twin-lens reflex cameras, the coated Industar-24 105mm lens is very capable, and the coupled rangefinder makes focusing simple. If you are lucky enough to find one in good condition, you have not only a tasty collector's item, but also a very usable classic.

Andrew says

With its truly vintage looks, the Mockba-5 – as a medium-format folding camera – is reasonably easy to get on with. Loading the 120 film requires concentration and careful study of the indicator window to avoid winding past the start. Parallax is a problem, though: what you see through the viewfinder is not necessarily what you will get in the image, since there are many angles through which you can look through the viewfinder. The discrepancy was most noticeable in close-up images. Although I allowed plenty of leeway in the compositions when shooting, I still managed to crop out some of the subject.



Nikon FM Phil Hall

About the Nikon FM

THE FM is a classic from Nikon. This mechanically operated semi-professional compact 35mm SLR was introduced in 1977, and was designed to be a more affordable alternative to Nikon's flagship F-series range of SLRs. Nikon would use this same chassis (with some minor modifications) for another 29 years, with the FE, FM2, FE2, FA and FM3A all based on it.

Nostalgic pang

This battered and bruised FM had seen a hard life before I picked it up in an Army Surplus Store some ten years ago for £20, while I borrowed Richard Sibley's similarly battered and bruised pre-Ai Nikkor 50mm f/1.4 to pop on the front.

There was a nostalgic pang as I loaded the film and advanced to frame number one, while the minimal controls were rather liberating after the plethora of settings normally on offer on my modern-day DSLR.

With an exposure dialled after some quick maths, making a mental note to adjust for the ISO 400 film stock I was shooting with, it was time to shoot.

I was constantly paranoid about getting the focusing right, to the point where it slowed me down quite a bit as I made minor adjustments – and while I was doing this I forgot to communicate with the model, confirming the stereotype that men can't multi-task.

With focusing sorted, I fired a shot. Then, as I tend to with a DSLR, I went to look at the rear screen to see what the shot looked like, only to be greeted with the stark black of the rear of the camera. Oh well. I fired the shutter again, only to realise that I hadn't wound the film on. After these schoolboy mistakes, I gradually got into the swing of things, though, and began to work a lot more quickly, with the FM being a pleasure to use.

I also wanted to see what the 50mm was like on a modern-day DSLR, so I married it with the rather unforgiving D810, with its 36-million-pixels. I was incredibly impressed by how sharp it was. The 50-year-old or so design delivers bags of detail – a match for my own 50mm f/1.4. You can see for yourself on the front cover of the magazine.



Final thoughts

Film photography inhabits an entirely different world from digital photography. There is no convenience of the storage card or a screen on the camera back for previewing your pictures, films are usually 12 exposures on 120 or 36 with 35mm, while a single memory card can hold hundreds or thousands at a time.

With film, you have to finish an entire roll before you're able to change film types (unless you want to waste the remainder of the film), whereas a digital camera's ISO, like everything else, can be adjusted with the touch of a button. Any digital photographer who makes the switch to film will tell you how much harder and involved it is before you see your results, but also how rewarding it is when you finally see them. Digital pictures emphasise sharpness, clarity and technical perfection, whereas film photographs are judged more for their fundamental aesthetics. This is why film photography, with decades-old cameras, films and processes, remains just as relevant as the latest digital cameras coming out today.

Digital photography focuses on various qualities from vintage film cameras and so, even though the mechanical and technical processes of taking a picture are the same in both mediums, film photography is just 'different'.

NIKON DIGITAL CAMERAS

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Starting today, 17th March until 29th June inclusive we are pleased to offer the following lens cashback deals from Nikon:

Category	Model	Amount
DX Lens	AF-S DX NIKKOR 12-24mm f/4G IF-ED	£150
	AF-S DX NIKKOR 17-55mm f/2.8G IF-ED	£150
FX Lenses	AF-S NIKKOR 24mm f/1.4G ED	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 35mm f/1.4	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 58mm f/1.4G	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 85mm f/1.4G	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 80-400mm f/4.5-5.6G ED VR	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 14-24mm f/2.8G ED	£150
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	AF-S NIKKOR 24-70mm f/2.8E VR	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VRII	£150
	AF-S NIKKOR 16-35mm f/4G ED VR	£115
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Nikon DAS DSI P hody	£5,199.00 £3,995.00	2 2 3 5 5 1
Nikon D4S DSLR body Nikon D4S+ AF-S 14-24mm f/2.8G IF-ED Kit	£5,265.00	3
Nikon D4S + AF-S 24-70mm f/2 8G IF-FD Kit	£5,205.00 £5,165.00	5
Nikon D4S + AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8G IF-ED Kit Nikon D4S + AF-S 14-24mm & 24-70mm f/2.8G Kit	£5,165.00 £6,395.00	5
Nikon D810A (Astrophotography) DSLR body	£2,699.00	
Nikon D810 DSLR body	£2,145.00	1
Nikon D810 DSLR body Nikon D810 + MB-D12 Grip Kit	£2,425.00	1
Nikon D810 + AF-S 14-24mm f/2 8G FD Nikkor	£3 445 00	
Nikon D810 + AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8G ED Nikkor	£3,335.00	F
Nikon D810 + AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8G ED Nikkor Nikon D810 + AF-S 14-24mm f/2.8G & AF-S 24-70mm	f/2.8G ED	Α
Nikkor Kit	£4,625.00	Α
Nikkor Kit Nikon MB-D12 Grip for D810	£285.00	Α
Nikon D750 DSLR body Nikon D750 + MB-D16 grip Kit Nikon D750 + AF-S 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5G ED VR Kit	£1.385.00	Α
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Nikon D750 + AF-S 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5G ED VR Kit	£1,719.00	Α
Nikon 1)/50 + $\Delta E = S / 24 = 120$ mm $t/4G = E1) VR Kit$	£1 939 00	Α
Nikon D610 DSLR body	£999.00	Α
Nikon D610 DSLR body Nikon D610 + MB-D14 Grip Kit Nikon D610 + AF-S 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5G ED VR Nikkor	£1,179.00 £1,360.00 £195.00	Α
Nikon D610 + AF-S 24-85mm 1/3.5-4.5G ED VR Nikkor	£1,360.00	Α
MB-D14 Grip for Db10	+ 195 00	Α
Nikon D500 DSLR body	£1,729.00	Α
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Nikon D7200 DSLR body Nikon D7200 + 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX IF-ED Kit	£739.00 £889.00	Α
Nikon D7200 + MB-D15 Grip Kit		A
Nikon D7100 DSI R body	£589.00	A
Nikon D7100 + MR-D15 Grip Kit	£790.00	A
Nikon D7100 DSLR body Nikon D7100 + MB-D15 Grip Kit Nikon D7100 + 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX IF-ED Kit Nikon D7100 + 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX ED Kit	£775.00	A
Nikon D7100 + 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX ED Kit	£1,095.00	A
Nikon D5500 body only	£499.00	A
Nikon D5500 body only Nikon D5500 + AF-P 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX Kit	£559.00	A
Nikon D5500 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX Kit	£735.00	A
Nikon D5300 DSLR body	£379.00	A
Nikon D5300 DSLR body Nikon D5300 + AF-P 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX Kit	£449.00	A
Nikon D5300 + AF-S 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX Kit	£599.00	A
Nikon D5200 DSLR body Nikon D5200 + AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VRII DX Kit	£299.00	A
Nikon D5200 + AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VRII DX Kit	£369.00	Á
Nikon D3300 DSLR body Nikon D3300 + AF-P 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX Kit	£229.00	A
Nikon D3300 + AF-P 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR DX Kit	£299.00	A
Nikon Df + AF-S 50mm f/1.8G Special Edition	£1,895.00	A
Nikon Df DSLR body, chrome or black finish	£1,775.00	A
Nikon D f + AF-S 50mm f/1.8G SPECIAL GOLD Edition	£5,000.00	Α
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NIKON 1 SYSTEM		
Nikon 1 \/2 10 20mm + Grin Kit	£725.00	Т
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Nikon 1 V3 10-30mm + Grip Kit Nikon 1 S1 11-27 5mm Kit	£475.00	Т
Nikon 1 S1 11-27.5mm + 30-110mm Kit	£595.00	
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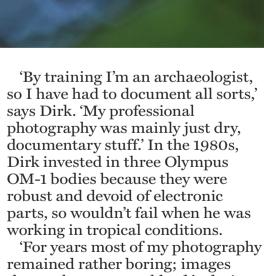
Dirk HR Spennemann is

fascinated by the optical capabilities of vintage and second-hand lenses. He talks to **Steve Fairclough** about how and why he couples classic optics with modern DSLRs

n his day job, Dirk HR Spennemann is Professor of Cultural Heritage Management at Charles Sturt University in New South Wales, Australia. But outside of academia his hobby is 'mucking around' with vintage cameras and lenses. Speaking via Skype from Australia, Dirk quickly makes it crystal clear that his style of photography is a creative escape from the much stricter constraints of documenting archaeological sites and historical buildings.



Left: Cindo Paris projection 85mm lens on Nikon D800 body



remained rather boring; images that make your eyes bleed,' admits Dirk. 'I was still required to take them as a professional, but if you photograph a building or a site there are very clear rules as to what you do and don't do – minimise distortion, proper angles, certain



details, the light has to be right; ideally it is boring and overcast so you get all the details you want without any shadows and so forth.

'I've been doing this for 30 years, but I very quickly realised that these [type of images] put your students to sleep. So you start by changing and playing with angles and so on – that's when my photography took off. I realised I could take two sets of images – one I wanted to take and those I have to take, so now I shoot twice.'

Inspirations and angles

Dirk refrains from naming any specific photographers as inspiration and reveals: 'I don't emulate other

photographers, but over time you suddenly realise there are dramatic angles to objects and places, which you can intentionally manipulate through points of view and from angles. The more you do [photography] I think the more your brain develops in a sense that you have a "mental eye". Now I've moved further on and have images in my head that I want to shoot – I'm not yet sure how and where, but I know exactly what I want. Sometimes I have to create technology to make it work and sometimes you can use a standard lens. The "mental eye" drives what I want to achieve.'

His decision to combine vintage lenses with modern DSLRs came,

Above: Hermagis Hellor f/4-5 135mm lens on Nikon D800 body

he says, 'About five or six years ago. I was collecting cameras, and still am; I collect the predecessor of Konica, but only up to 1945. One of the things I quickly realised was that as lens technology has improved, they have become sharper and sharper, to a level that they are no longer nice. They are great for certain things, but there's a sharpness to it which I think is almost brutal.'

This dislike of the brutal sharpness of modern lenses, combined with Dirk's overriding desire to achieve stunning, almost 'painting-like' background bokeh and incredibly shallow depth of field in his images, meant he

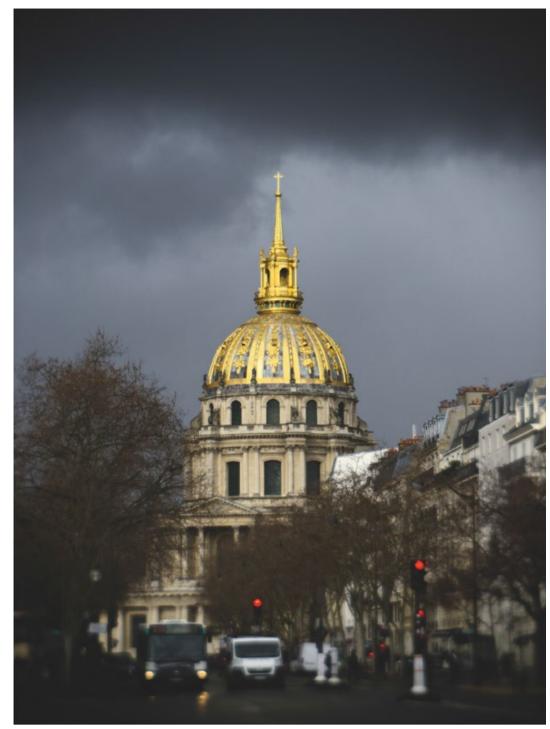
had to seek a different optical route. It was one he felt was only possible with the optical make-up and design of older, pre-1945 lenses that feature no lens coatings and more aperture blades – Dirk was seeking between 13 and 20 blades in order to get more circular bokeh.

One of the other key advantages is the fact that the coverage of the vintage lenses – which were often originally produced for larger format cameras – is much greater than that of a 24x36mm full-frame digital sensor, which implies that only the centre of the lens is rendered onto the sensor while any fall off or aberration at the margins is omitted.

What's in the kitbag?

Although Dirk's conventional kitbag is quite straightforward – it includes the Nikon D300 and D800 DSLRs, an array of modern Nikkor lenses, a Fujifilm X-Pro1 and a Widelux panoramic film camera – it's when the marriage of much older lenses to modern Nikon DSLR bodies comes into play that things get interesting. He estimates he now has 'maybe hundreds' of vintage lenses and a similar number of cameras.

'I always liked the Nikon [system] but it has one setback for playing with historic lenses and that's the flange [focal] distance, which is about 3.5mm more than the Canon – 3.5mm is a hell of a lot when it comes to focal points,' says Dirk. 'I liked the D80; then the D300 and







when the D800 came out you could blow images up to the size of a wall - that was perfect because it meant I could shoot and enlarge as needed.'

He adds: 'In my collection I've got early Konica lenses – the early Hexars and so forth. The one I favour is the Hexar 20cm, that's how it's marked, so [it's really a] 200mm f/3.5. It comes from a camera by Konica – although at that time [1940] they were known as Konishiroku. It's a lens designed for an SK-100 aerial camera so it has a very flat representation and it's for medium format; it normally shoots on 7x7in. It has an absolutely shallow, flat depth of field with 19 aperture blades – it's perfect.

'The other one I really like, which has a brass barrel on it with two focusing wheels, is actually a projection lens. It's for a Laterna Magica image projector and has no aperture at all – you can only shoot it wide open; it has the most gorgeous bokeh you can imagine.



It's the Cindo 85mm that, interestingly, is very sharp, but it's "soft-sharp" if that makes sense. It has a focus drop-off which is really flattering for portraits and it would also make a good video lens.'

Aside from those two key lenses, Dirk's collection includes classic lenses from makers such as Rodenstock, Renaux, Emil Busch, Krauss, Pipon, Baker & Rouse, Hermagis and Berthiot.

The attachment process

The fusion of vintage lenses with modern DSLRs is something Dirk calls 'antique camera simulator', as anyone using this method is simulating the results they would get from an antique camera and lens combo. The next process is how to achieve this fusion of old and new imaging worlds.

'Basically, there are a couple of fixed things you have – I've got two focusing helicoids, which gives me about 20cm of extension and quite Above left: Unnamed, probably British, 5in brass-bound projection lens (52.5mm, Petzval design) in brass focusing mount on Nikon D800 body

Above: KMZ Helios 44 lens on Nikon D800 body

Left: Cindo Paris projection 85mm lens on Nikon D800 body

'He estimates he now has "maybe hundreds" of vintage lenses and a similar number of cameras'

a bit of focusing range. You have to shoot with a lens that has a focal length of more than 50mm; if you choose one that's less than 50mm you are in strife because otherwise it simply focuses in between the sensor plane and the lens.

'It's basically a question of measuring out the diameter of the screw and the type of screw fitting the lens has, finding a filter ring which has the same diameter, and then you are in the normal filter pattern – reduce it from 57mm to 52mm or whatever. In the end, you cobble together a series of those rings or extension tubes and you know the lens is say 180mm, 6in, or whatever, then you've got some sort of idea of how much you need to put in - then it's a case of literally practising and seeing what you end up with. Digital is instant

resolution and instant results, so you can check and you know what you're getting.'

Finding and buying

As for sourcing the vintage optics, Dirk reveals: 'When I'm in Paris I go to the flea markets; I know the traders and they bring stuff in and show it to you. You buy online or buy at camera fairs, but they tend to be over-priced. You then follow certain trends so you work out what type of lens does what and you get two or three different makes of the same type of lens to see if there's any big [optical] difference. They usually come with a similar screw system, so once one set-up is going you can just swap the lens, which will also be the front element, in and out and see what it does. The differences are quite often



fairly limited, but some of them are quite dramatic.'

With regard to prices, Dirk laughs and says: 'The most I've spent on a lens is a standard Nikon – they're way more expensive. Most of the lenses you would end up with, unless you get ones that have a real cachet, you'd be looking at about £50 or £60. If you want to spend £100 you can have the world at your feet. I've got a Vöigtlander Heliar coming which I want to play with, but that cost me about £20 because it was stuck to a camera and people didn't realise what it was.

'Lenses don't have to be expensive. If you get a few filter-ring adapters and whatever you need as an adapter to get from an M42 or M39 [screw fit] to get on to whatever digital system you've got... once you've got that sorted the rest of it is basically playing. I would urge people to start with a cheaper lens to see how complex that is but, if they can play with Lego, they can do it!'

Shooting with vintage lenses

As for shooting with the lenses, Dirk explains: 'They tend to be less forgiving in strong contrast, so you have to think about not having strong shadows, unless you really want them. In many respects, they tend to work better if it's slightly ambient, overcast light rather than strong sunlight. Australia, where I live, has fairly brutal light, so for European photographers these lenses have more applications.

'What I've learned with these

30

once you think it's in focus you photograph and then you rock forward and then backwards about half an inch or an inch [1-2.5cm] at the most and take a few photos that will give you sufficient [options] so that one of those will be the perfect [picture]. They'll all be good, but one will be quantifiably better.'

There's one disadvantage Dirk wants to make very clear - that is, digital camera sensors are, of course, electromagnetically charged and so they suck dust.

'If you want to have a nice clean sensor, just weld the lens on and keep it on there, but the moment you're mucking around with lenses, moveable parts and historic stuff, there's crud. So just get used to the fact that you are investing in a perpetual camera clean.'

Post-production workflow

All of Dirk's images are shot raw and he explains: 'I back up instantly so they're safe because of my paranoia [about losing images]. Then I go through the images to see which ones I may or may not want to play with and then it's usually only a minor sharpening or minor contrast adjustment - a bit of playing with the levels – unless I really want a [dramatic] outcome.'

He previously used Aperture but since switching operating systems he now deploys Lightroom and reveals: 'For black & white conversions I actually prefer the Google [Nik Collection] Silver Efex lenses, because they're so flat, is that Pro [plug-in], which is very nice and



Top: Rokuoh Sha Hexar Series I 21cm f/4.5 lens on Nikon D800 body

Above: French Aplanat 240mm f/8 (unmarked) on Nikon D800 body



To find out more about Dirk HR Spennemann's photography and vintage photographic equipment, visit his website at www.ausphoto.net

simple, but it is a one-trick pony that's just for the conversion to black & white. I've got an array of those – it's not just one program which does it all – there are certain things for very specific things.'

When quizzed on what he wants viewers to see in his post-processed pictures Dirk responds: 'It's simple. As a photographer I've got control over your eye in the sense that I choose to show you what I want you to see but I have no control over your mind. I choose all the angles and other stuff; in post-processing I can play with highlights and whatever I want to and I give you something that I can control. The moment you are looking at it you are interpreting what you're seeing based on your life experiences, social upbringing, interests, mood at the time when you're looking at the image. If it [the image] is boring then everyone will see the same [thing] and I've failed.'











Click

From the south coast of England to the Highlands of Scotland, we bring you four of the UK's most interesting second-hand camera stores where you can not only grab a bargain but, unlike the internet, also take it away the same day

collect

he internet may be the first choice for many photographers keen to snap up a bargain, but if you want a keen price advice you can rely on, as well as the satisfaction of being able to have your used camera or lens immediately, nothing beats paying a visit to a good, independent, second-hand camera retailer.

There are a number of retailers

choose from around the UK, but to provide as fair a geographic spread as possible we've singled out four: one each in West Sussex, West Yorkshire, Inverness-shire and Conwy. At each you'll find a rich selection of cameras, lenses and accessories, a wealth of good advice and, above all, you'll be able to leave the shop with your new purchase without having to wait for it to be delivered, which has got to be good.

Clock Tower Cameras carries a range of cameras and lenses, both vintage and contemporary



D3100

'My colleague sold Derren Brown, the TV illusionist, a nice Rolleiflex a few weeks ago'



Clock Tower Cameras Brighton



THIS small, independent store in Brighton, East Sussex, celebrates its 21st anniversary this year. 'We've always specialised in second-hand items, but have diversified recently,' explains Paul Wrede, the owner. 'We stock more lenses than cameras, but also sell a lot of accessories – new tripods and bags, film, and so on.'

The most common digital cameras people bring to the store for sale or part exchange are three or four-generation-old, mid to entry-level SLRs such as the Canon EOS 500 and 500D, and the Nikon 300 and 3100.

'It's often somebody's first camera and they are looking for an upgrade,' says Paul. 'With film, it's everything. We get a lot of people selling us stuff they found in the loft or were given by relatives, or gear they bought a while ago and aren't using. We're particularly keen on 1980s film SLRs such as the Nikon FM2, which does very well.'

Leicas, including digital versions, hold their value well, as do Rolleiflexes.

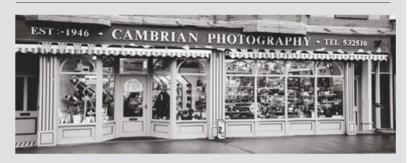
'My colleague sold Derren Brown, the TV illusionist, a nice Rolleiflex a few weeks ago,' Paul recalls. 'He popped in to get the sensor cleaned on his Leica digital and spotted the Rolleiflex in the window. We have a lot of Rolleiflexes, and the Vivian Maier documentary [Finding Vivian Maier, 2013] has really boosted people's interest in them.'

Paul reckons the most interesting camera on sale at Clock Tower is an unused Canon F-1 with a huge 250-frame film back: 'The guy bought all this technical gear back in the 1970s and never used it. The camera comes with a lovely Canon 50mm f/1.2 lens.'

So does he find that customers tend to haggle more in this age of eBay? 'With second-hand, haggling goes with the territory,' says Paul. 'It's good for us if a customer walks away thinking they've done well or got a bargain. I'd rather that than they leave thinking they'd overpaid or we'd been difficult.'

Tel 01273 706 010 www.clocktowercameras.co.uk

Cambrian Photography Colwyn Bay, Conwy



CAMBRIAN Photography is the oldest specialist store featured here, and was founded by Dick Duncalf in 1946. 'We made a good business taking pictures of tourists by the castle and the Smallest House,' he recalls. 'Even then, we used to have the prints ready in an hour. There was no film or paper available, so we used bulk film and paper from the Air Force: 35mm from the gun cameras and 1,000ft waterproof paper cut down to 93/8in. Because there was such a shortage of films and papers, we started to sell the ex–Air Force stock in the shop. Pretty soon the tail started to wag the dog!'

Since then, the store has gone from strength to strength. As well as new digital and second-hand digital/film cameras and accessories, there's also a studio – Dick converted it from an old bakery – for rent. Another attraction is the collection of plate cameras and antique equipment that sits on the higher shelves surrounding the shop.

'I started the collection because I didn't have a pension!' Dick jokes. 'Sadly, most of the cameras are boxed away as we don't have enough space to exhibit them. We looked at opening a photographic museum at one time in Conwy but, sadly, that all fell through.'

Dick is still involved in the store, but the day-to-day running is now taken care of by his son, Mark.

'The most common items sold to us are DSLR lenses,' explains Jack Mayall, web development manager. 'The most interesting camera we have is a Sanderson Tropical camera – a rare field camera from the influential British company. As for the most interesting lens, it's currently a Canon TSE 24mm.'



Tel 01492 532 510 www.cambrianphoto.co.uk



West Yorkshire Cameras Leeds

HOWARD Parker and his colleague Tom started West Yorkshire Cameras while in their third year at the University of Huddersfield. Their customers approach the store with a broad range of equipment – from basic Bakelite box cameras to high-end premium and sought-after collectibles.

'The most commonly offered cameras are East German and Russian SLR cameras, and lenses – Praktica, Zenit and so on,' reveals Howard.

Anything that's rare or desirable sells out fast. 'We actually have a waiting list for Mamiya 7s, Contax T2s and Pentax 67s,' Howard explains. 'However, most customers come to us wanting a good,

functional SLR for around £50.'

What's the most interesting camera Howard has in stock? 'It's the Welta Superfekta – a folding, 6x9 mediumformat, twin-lens reflex. It's a total oddity but really beautiful. We also have a Kodak Bantam Special, which is an enamel art deco, clamshell rangefinder camera. Ask me next week and I'll have a different answer!'

When it comes to lenses, Howard has an original chrome Leica 35mm f/1.4 Summilux from 1961. 'It's in close competition with the Nikon 400mm f/3.5. Or maybe it's the huge Schneider 360mm f/5.6 large-format lens which, when the rear element is



removed, becomes a 620mm f/12.'

Howard has some useful tips for buying second-hand film cameras: 'Most faults are associated with the particular model you're considering, but in general you need to check first that the shutter works at both the high and low speeds. Set it to one second (or as low as possible), and check that it is indeed opening and closing for one second. Next, check the highest speeds, making sure it opens and closes, and without capping. Look through the viewfinder, and check the infinity focus of the lens and the viewfinder/ rangefinder. Also, check the electronics, particularly the accuracy of the meter

Above: Praktica and Zenit cameras are among some of the most popular brands to enter the store and any LCD or LED display. If you're buying a lens, shine a strong light through it to check for haze, fungus or anything else nasty. You can also do yourself a favour by taking the time to make sure the aperture and focus work smoothly. It's just a few seconds out of your time.'





Tel: 0113 246 0868 wycameras.com



Ffordes Photographic Beauly, Inverness

'WE ARE one of the largest dealers in used camera equipment in the country, so we see a lot of different types come and go,' explains Steve Byford of Ffordes. 'I suppose the most brands we see are Canon, Nikon and Leica.'

Steve is keen to point out some enticing highlights from his more interesting stock: 'We currently have a Leica M 60th-anniversary edition camera set, which looks lovely in titanium, and a 24-carat, gold-plated Hasselblad 500CM. There is also a Leica M 240 Harrods edition with rather striking red calf leather. It's one of a limited edition of just 25 cameras.'

As for lenses, Steve cites a very rare Leica 15mm f/2.8 Super Elmarit Aspheric lens, as new and priced at £4,499. 'Quite often, these lenses are purchased by collectors, but they are also bought and converted for use on other digital or video cameras. We also have a rare Pentax 15mm f/3.5 SMC PK lens, an ultrawide, but much

M

cheaper than the Leica at only £369.' Ffordes first opened its doors in May 1960 and is going as strong as it did all those many years ago. So if you're in the Inverness area, give it a try.

Tel 01463 783 850 www.ffordes.com

'Quite often, these lenses are purchased by collectors, but they are also bought and converted for use on other digital or video cameras'

Ffordes in Inverness-shire is one of the country's largest dealers if you're looking to get your hands on some second-hand kit







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Pro Filter Kits

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Close up & Macro

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Canon EOS	Con/Yash	£24.95	Micro 4/3	Leica R	£29.95
Canon EOS	Leica R	£22.95	Micro 4/3	Leica M	£29.95
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Canon EOS-M	Canon EOS	£29.95	Micro 4/3	Canon FD	£29.95
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Canon EOS-M	Nikon	£29.95	4/3	M42	£17.95
Canon EOS-M	Canon FD	£29.95	4/3	Con/Yash	£22.95
Canon EOS-M	C Mount	£29.95	4/3	Leica R	£22.95
Canon EOS-M	M39	£29.95	4/3	Nikon	£22.95
Canon EOS-M	M42	£29.95	4/3	Olympus OM	£22.95
Fuji X	M42	£24.95	4/3	Pentax K	£22.95
Fuji X	Leica M	£29.95	Pentax	M42	£18.95
Fuji X	Nikon	£29.95	Pentax	Nikon	£44.95
Fuji X	Canon EOS	£29.95	Pentax	Sony Alpha	£44.95
Fuji X	Olympus OM	£29.95	Pentax	Canon FD	£44.95
Fuji X	4/3	£29.95	Sony Alpha	M42	£15.95
Fuji X	Canon FD	£29.95	Sony Alpha	Minolta MD	£44.95
Fuji X	Con/Yash	£29.95	Sony Alpha	Nikon	£44.95
Nikon	M42	£24.95	Sony Alpha	Pentax K	£44.95
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Accessories

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Fujin lens vacuum

cleaner

● £100 ● usa-ipp.com/fujin.html

Michael Topham tests a vacuum designed to extract dust from the innards of your DSLR

At a glance

- Powered by 4x AAA batteries
- Supplied with spare filters
- Canon and Nikon mounts available

THE FUJIN lens-shaped vacuum cleaner attaches to the lens mount of your camera. It is designed to suck dust and dirt from the surface of the sensor without exposing the camera to fresh deposits from the surrounding environment. This revised Mark II version produces 2.7x more airflow than the first-generation Fujin lens vacuum and is said to refresh the air inside the camera six times every second. To prevent dirt or dust penetrating the camera but without disturbing the vacuum airflow, the unit has an electrostatically charged filter behind the lens cap.

In use

Fujin recommends using the vacuum in combination with the camera's automatic sensor-cleaning or continuous-shooting mode, and pointing the camera down for maximum effect. Attaching the unit and turning it on using the AF/MF-style switch at the side instantly brings it to life. Although it managed to remove a few specs of light dust within a couple of minutes, it couldn't shift the more stubborn dirt on the surface of the sensor. It left me with little choice but to finish the job with a sensor-cleaning swab.

This lens-shaped vacuum cleaner is by no means the ultimate sensor-cleaning device, and it isn't cheap. I'd be tempted to buy some good-quality sensor cleaning swabs instead. Alternatively, you might want to consider a next-day, professional, sensor-cleaning service such as that offered by Calumet, which is also cheaper (£57 for a full-frame sensor clean).



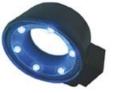
ALSO CONSIDER

Visible Dust Quasar Sensor Loupe

£80. www.alphaodl.co.uk

This handy device is designed to be placed over the lens mount of a camera to magnify any dust particles, smudges or

other nasties that can cling to the sensor unseen.



Green Clean Mini Vacuum

£42, www.green-clean.at/en/home

The Mini Vacuum is designed to suck dust from the sensor and other areas, but like the Fujin vacuum, it's best at tackling loose particles.

Eyelead Sensor Dust Sticking Bar

£29, www.bristolcameras.co.uk

This brush has an adhesive rubber head that removes dust, oil and any other residues on the image sensor. It's highly recommended, but not suitable for Sony-sensor cameras.



38

Benro Smart 20 shoulder bag



ALTHOUGH best known for its tripods, Benro offers a wide array of camera bags spanning small messenger bags to big backpacks. While they do look good, for the most part they're functional things. However, Benro's Smart range pays close attention to the style of the bag while still maintaining a high level of functionality.

The Benro Smart bag comes in three sizes. The Smart 10 is ideal for a bridge camera, small CSC or DSLR with a spare lens. The Smart 20 can house a medium-sized DSLR or CSC with a couple of lenses and a flash. Finally, the Smart 30 can accommodate large DSLR kits, flashes, two or three spare lenses and other items.

Our review sample is the Benro Smart 20 shoulder bag. I used it to carry an Olympus OM–D E–M5 Mark II with a medium–sized lens attached, an 8in tablet, and some chargers and personal items around The Photography Show in Birmingham. I found that all this gear fitted into the bag easily and it was very comfortable to carry. The Smart 20 comes in a variety of colours including bright blue, yellow tan – which I particularly like – and grey and black with red detailing (a great colour option for all Canon fans). The test sample I had was in a chocolate colour with grey details, which looked rather good.

The Smart shoulder bag is made from tough, waterproof nylon, with thick padding all around the inside and two detachable dividers. To secure the top, there are two Velcro patches to fasten the bag, and a clip to hold the flap down. Users can have top access to their kit via a zip on the top of the bag. There's also a neoprene pouch on the side, designed to hold a water bottle, and there are plenty of little pockets for notepads, pens, SD cards, documents and other such essentials.

The Benro Smart 20 is a good-looking and practical bag. Being available in a variety of colours, it should have a wide appeal.

Callum McInerney-Riley

The Benro Smart 20 is both practical and stylish. Our review sample easily accommodated a CSC with a lens attached and other accessories





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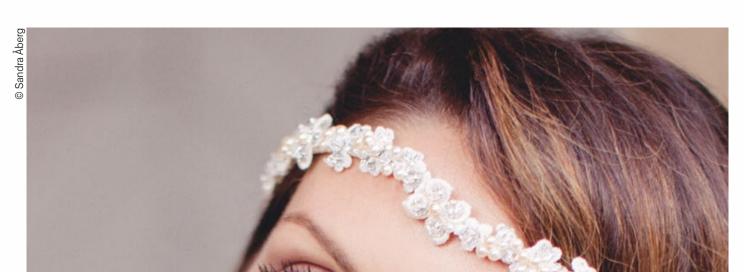
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Matt Golowczynski uses his expertise to round up eight second-hand camera deals that will help you get the most out of the used-camera market

f you've been tempted to buy a new camera recently, you may well have considered opting for a second-hand version of something that's otherwise no longer available - and there are good reasons for doing so. Previous generations of cameras aren't always dissimilar to what's currently on the market, and with an increasing number of reputable companies seeking to establish themselves in the second-hand marketplace, it's easier than ever to buy with confidence.

Of course, the adage of you only get what you pay for is always worth bearing in mind, and while it's possible to find a genuine bargain it's also worth asking questions and doing your research before parting with your money. When buying an interchangeablelens model of any kind, for

example, you should ask about the condition of the sensor, as this may have a stubborn mark or defective pixels. Some retailers state the shutter actuations of DSLRs, although bear in mind that this can be falsified. Even when it is accurate, it is only one indication of how extensively a camera has been used.

With cameras of any kind, you should check that all controls are operational and that the rear screen and viewfinder are clear and in good condition. It's common for well-used models to exhibit a 'shining' around edges and corners, and while this in itself should not affect their performance, it gives an idea as to how well they have been taken care of. One big advantage of buying from a shop is that you can check this before you part with your money.

Used equipment isn't covered by the same kind of warranty as new stock, and this will typically vary from model to model. Six-month warranties are fairly typical for second-hand cameras, although 12-month warranties have become common as more companies have started to sell second-hand stock. Some cameras may not come with any warranty at all, and if a model is far cheaper than expected, make sure it's not defective in any serious way as it may be sold 'as seen' or even as spares. Make sure you also check what comes with the camera, as it's fairly common to have third-party batteries or chargers that may not be reliable.

Obviously, you should also check the reputation of a company before you buy from it, particularly if buying online. Shopping online can be easier as you can quickly

check websites such as Trustpilot, Feefo and Review Centre for testimonials from customers: companies with a significant following on social media also tend to be more reputable than those without. Many reputable dealers also frequently advertise in Amateur Photographer.

If buying on websites such as eBay, the seller will usually state a returns policy, so make sure you're happy with this before you buy. The site also offers a money-back guarantee in the event that the item you buy doesn't turn up or is in a condition that's different to that described, so make a note of the description and check this upon receipt of the item.

Over the following pages we've chosen eight cameras across all levels and prices up to £400, which in some way stand out from the herd.

Canon EOS 100D

• £210 (body only) • £240 (with 18-55mm kit lens)



THE EOS 100D is Canon's smallest and lightest DSLR to date, but with much the same spec as the more advanced EOS 700D. The EOS 100D is still available new for around £330 with its kit lens, but a few good-quality examples can be found secondhand for as little as £210.

Thanks to its light weight and compact dimensions, it's a fine contender as a first-time camera for general use, or for travel photography with a suitable optic. While its 18-million-pixel sensor, pentamirror viewfinder and 4fps shooting mode may all seem fairly pedestrian, the EOS 100D's 3in LCD has a respectably high 1.04-million-dot resolution and the advantage of touch functionality.

Those keen on video capture will be pleased to learn that the camera's full HD video option is

complemented by Canon's Hybrid CMOS AF II technology to maintain smooth, continuous focus during movie recording, and there's even a mic port on its side.

While its size and weight are its most obvious selling points, they are perhaps also the EOS 100D's biggest drawbacks. Those with larger hands may be put off by the camera's small grip, while those using heavier lenses may find such combinations imbalanced.

As with any EOS model, you also benefit from almost 30 years' worth of compatible and widely available optics, not only from Canon but also many third parties such as Sigma and Tamron. So, if your long-term plan is to have a number of different optics in your kit bag, the EOS 100D would be a capable and affordable base around which to build this.









FOR A long time the EOS 5D was the camera many Canon users aspired to own, although as the oldest of the eight here – and by some margin, too – it comes as little surprise to find that much of its spec sheet today looks largely outdated.

Its 2.5in LCD screen displays details with just 230,000 pixels, while its standard sensitivity range only extends to ISO 1,600, with an ISO 3,200 expansion setting. There's no video recording or live view, either, while the 3fps burst mode is pretty much what we'd only now expect from the most basic DSLRs or medium-format models so advanced that burst shooting isn't a focus.

Still, those drawn to the EOS 5D will probably be happy to overlook the above for its positive qualities, namely a 13-million-pixel

full-frame sensor and pentaprism viewfinder with exchangeable focus screens inside a solid magnesium-alloy body, together with compatibility with decadesworth of EF glass. Canon has also replaced many popular optics with second-generation versions, making many of the earlier samples readily available on the second-hand market.

Those managing to find an EOS 5D in good condition should be aware that the camera's shutter was only rated to 100,000 actuations. As the EOS 5D was a stalwart of many semi-professional photographers it's likely that, by this point, many models may not be too far away from this figure. Still, those kept in good condition and not intended for demanding shoots may well still have a lot of life left in them.





Fujifilm X-E1

£180 (body only)
 £370 (kit with 18-55mm lens)







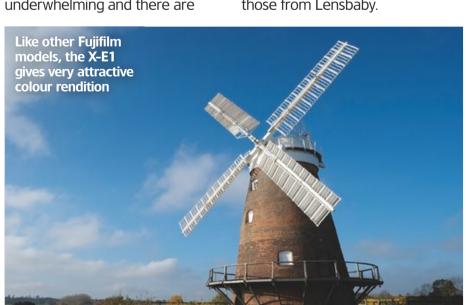
FUJIFILM'S X-Pro1 may have been the camera that initially won over many DSLR users to the idea of a compact system camera as their primary body, but as a flagship model aimed at a discerning audience it was only ever going to win over so many. And so, with similarly stellar image quality and a familiar design, the more affordable X-E1 appeared as the most logical next release.

The X–E1 employs the same highly regarded sensor as the X–Pro1, and although it mirrors that camera in offering a hybrid multi viewfinder, the OLED panel within it has a significantly higher 2.36 million dots compared to the 1.44 million dots of the X–Pro1's viewfinder LCD.

On the downside, the 460,000-dot LCD is somewhat underwhelming and there are

plenty of good examples of the more junior – but more recent – X-M1 around to rival it. While this lacks the X-E1's viewfinder and processing engine, it features the same sensor, a larger and higher-resolution screen that can be tilted, Wi-Fi functionality and a marginally smaller and lighter body than the X-E1.

Fujifilm has won much acclaim for its lens range, although it's not quite as developed as the Micro Four Thirds system, which started life a little earlier. Still, the company has done very well to bring about a number of options to market quickly, while the system's popularity has led to the availability of third-party options from the likes of Zeiss and Samyang, and even novelty options such as those from Lensbaby.



Nikon D700

• £399 (body only)







CANON'S EOS 5D has enjoyed a sub-£400 price point for some time, and now, almost eight years after its release, the full-frame Nikon D700 joins it in that bracket.

Designed as a compact version of the D3, the model received rave reviews thanks to its performance-to-cost ratio, with its relatively modest 12-million-pixel count ensuring it maintained strong image quality at higher sensitivities. Twelve million pixels may sound a little behind the times by today's standards, but it's more than enough for most uses and it's worth remembering that manufacturers are still releasing 12-million-pixel cameras onto the market.

As a model aimed at the professional user, the D700 is furnished with a pentaprism viewfinder, a sensitive 51-point AF

system with very capable subject tracking, and even with features such as intervalometer and AF fine-tuning, all wrapped up in a robust, weather-sealed body. Live view is also on hand for easier composition, although video recording is absent.

While you may not always get full compatibility with older F-mount lenses, there are enough modern choices from Nikon and third parties to satisfy a range of budgets. You can even use it with DX-format lenses in the camera's crop mode.

The only rub is that, as an eight-year-old, pro-oriented model, the majority of D700 models will have been well used. The camera did, however, ship with a screen protector as standard, so there's a good chance this will be in a reasonably good condition.



Olympus OM-D E-M5 | Panasonic Lumix

• £250 (body only) • £390 (with 12-50mm lens)

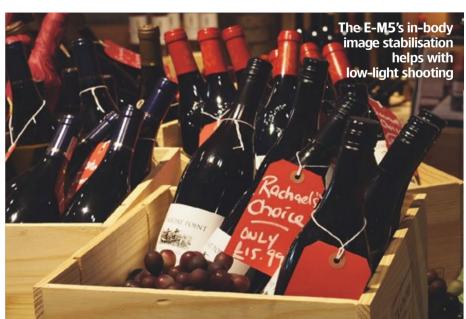


UNVEILED four years ago as the debut offering in the popular OM-D series, the E-M5's solid and well-rounded spec sheet means it still compares favourably with current offerings. You can find the camera in its standard 14-42mm kit option for around £300 - and at this price, it's difficult to think of a body that offers more.

The E-M5 is based around a 16-million-pixel Micro Four Thirds sensor that's equipped with an effective 5-axis imagestabilisation system, which reduces the need to use high sensitivities for handheld shooting. It offers 9fps burst shooting – dropping to 4.2fps with AF maintained – as well as a 1.44-million-dot electronic viewfinder and a tiltable OLED touchscreen display, all inside a weather-resistant body. Front and rear control dials

provide a DSLR-like shooting experience, so it's great for those making the transition from more conventional models. However, the body and some controls are on the small and cramped side.

The OM-D E-M5 arrived with 14-42mm and 12-50mm kit lens options, and can be still found in these configurations. With the latter set-up, the average kit-lens focal lengths can be increased and provide complete weather-sealing with the body. The Micro Four Thirds system has also revitalised the appetite for older lenses (here benefiting from the camera's image stabilisation), and there's a plethora of adapters to enable a raft of different body/lens combinations. Micro Four Thirds users are, however, well served by more recent optics designed specifically for the system.



DMC-GF1 • £75 (body only) • £170 (with 14-42mm kit lens)



PANASONIC has had a fairly prolific run with its Micro Four Thirds system ever since it launched its original Lumix DMC-G1 back in 2008, and as a consequence it has seen its cameras frequently lining second-hand dealers' shelves. Although the design and intentions of the GF line have been inconsistent with successive models, the initial GF1 was widely viewed as a positive start, and it remains well worth a look.

In contrast to the smooth, rounded edges and greater focus on touchscreen operation common to later models in the series, the GF1 sported a mode dial, hotshoe and many physical controls, with a smart body that aped the form of the company's LX-format compacts when fitted with a pancake lens. All of this was built around a 12.1-million-pixel Live MOS sensor, although image stabilisation was lens-based.

Anyone investing in a Micro Four Thirds body benefits from access to a well-developed range of compatible optics, which is still the largest among CSC systems. Between them, Panasonic and Olympus have all the most important options covered, and further offerings from Sigma and Tamron, and more exotic options from the likes of Samyang, sweeten the system's appeal.

At around £75 for its body only, it's something of a bargain if you already have compatible lenses. although with many G-series siblings and an equally abundant selection of previous Olympus Pen models, it's far from the only credible choice for those on a particularly tight budget.



Pentax K-5

• £310 (body only)







PENTAX'S DSLRs have long offered excellent functionality for their price, and on the secondhand market for little over £300 the K-5 is a particular bargain.

Given that it sat at the helm of Pentax's DSLR line on its release, its spec sheet shows it to be competitive and well rounded. Inside its tough magnesium-allov body lies a 16.3-million-pixel APS-C sensor that's stabilised along three axes and operates to a maximum (extended) sensitivity equivalent to ISO 51,200. Full HD video recording and 7fps burst shooting are also on hand, joined by a pentaprism viewfinder that not only offers approximately 100% coverage of the scene, but also a high 0.92x magnification.

While the 11-point AF system may appear somewhat limited by today's standards, with all but two

of these points being cross type, it does prove itself to be sensitive and capable. Video options are somewhat basic too, despite the inclusion of a mic port around the side, although many photographers don't use this enough (if at all) to make this a deal-breaker.

The second-hand market is awash with older Pentax lenses, and although continuous revisions to the mount mean that compatibility isn't always 100% with newer bodies, most remain usable enough to be considered by Pentax owners. The current lens line-up may not be quite as abundant as those from Nikon and Canon in terms of its coverage, but when third-party options from the likes of Sigma and Tamron are also considered, this isn't a significant drawback.



Sony Cyber-shot DSC- RX100 II • £310







SONY'S Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 series has been hugely successful in recent years, setting a new standard for enthusiast compacts thanks to the relatively large 1in sensor shoehorned into a small body.

While all four models in the line have been well received, the second iteration in the series has much to recommend it. Sony chose to keep the 20.1-millionpixel resolution of the sensor and the 28-100mm f/1.8-4.9 unchanged from the original model, but revised the former's architecture to a back-illuminated design, which helped it to deliver lower noise and faster AF in low light. The further additions of a tilting LCD, a multi-interface show for external accessories and excellent Wi-Fi and NFC functions round off its specs nicely.

Of course, no camera is perfect and the camera's impressively wide f/1.8 aperture at the wide angle shrinks to an underwhelming f/4.9 at the telephoto end, although this is perhaps partly mitigated by respectable noise performance and an effective image–stabilisation system. Some have found the streamlined design comes at the cost of handling too, although add–on grips are available.

The RX100 II was eventually updated by a mark III version, the improvements of which included not only a built-in EVF and a brighter (but shorter) optic, but also a premium of around £260. The subsequent arrival of the mark IV version means that the mark III can be frequently found secondhand, but for those not fussed about these changes the RX100 II is clearly a better buy.



Our verdict

IF THESE eight models prove anything, it's that price is no longer the barrier it once was to having a capable camera. With even just a basic level of research, those not fussed about having the very latest equipment will soon realise how easy it can be to bag a high-quality camera at a reasonable price, particularly if they compare spec sheets between different generations of camera and look into lens options to make their money go even further.

While the Canon EOS 5D and Nikon D700 full-frame models may not look as impressive on paper as some of the more recent additions, and have their age working against them from the perspective of condition, they are currently the cheapest ways of entering the world of full-frame photography. They also have plenty of appeal towards the other end of the market as back-up or second bodies for those shooting weddings or other events. Those wanting something smaller and lighter can look towards the Pentax K-5 and Canon EOS 100D, which have an extensive selection

of lens option to heighten their appeal and plenty of technology still deemed relevant enough to be included in current models.

The rapid development and high turnover of compact system cameras has meant that these now form a large part of the secondhand camera market, making it easier to get relatively up-to-date specs at a more affordable price. Fujifilm's X-E1 was intended for an enthusiast user and priced accordingly, so to find such a well-specified model for less than £400 with a lens is brilliant. To further its appeal, Fuji has developed a reputation for excellent support of existing X-series users through firmware updates, and has updated the X-E1's firmware nine times since the model's launch. True, some of these updates have been relatively minor, but it's still encouraging to know you're buying into a system with this level of continuous support.

At such a knock-down price the Panasonic Lumix DMC-GF1 is ideal as a take-anywhere body for Micro Four Thirds users, while the

Olympus OM-D E-M5, in addition to being an excellent first-time Micro Four Thirds model in its own right, is also a highly capable alternative to the Mark II version, which still retails at around three times its price. Given the range of Micro Four Thirds adapters available for legacy lenses, the two models are also great for those keen on getting the most out of lenses not specifically designed for the system.

Sony's RX series has often been criticised for its price premium over other enthusiast compacts. However, the Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 II is now less than half the price of what it initially commanded while still putting up a decent fight against current models. It suits those who want a capable pocket camera for situations where anything with interchangeable lenses isn't practical, particularly when you consider that most of its peers are too bulky to slip into the average pocket.

Naturally, aside from our top picks here, plenty more bargains can be had on the second-hand market. Happy shopping!

Data file

·	CARON	Campi	(A)	Alban		LLAME OF 1	PENIA	TO SOUTH
	Canon EOS 100D	Canon EOS 5D	Fujifilm X-E1	Nikon D700	Olympus OM-D E-M5	Panasonic Lumix DMC-GF1	Pentax K-5	Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 II
Sensor	18-million-effective- pixel APS-C CMOS	13-million-effective- pixel full-frame CMOS	16-million-effective- pixel, APS-C X-Trans CMOS	12.1-million-effective- pixel CMOS	16.1-million-effective- pixel Four Thirds Live MOS	12.11-million- effective-pixel Four Thirds Live MOS	16.3-million-effective- pixel CMOS	20.2-million-pixel Exmor-R BSI-CMOS
Output size	5,184x3,456 pixels	4,368x2,912 pixels	4,896x3,264 pixels	4,256x2,832 pixels	4,608x3,456 pixels	4,000x3,000 pixels	4,928x3,264 pixels	5,472x3,648 pixels
Focal-length magnification	1.6x	1x	1.5x	1.5x when using DX lenses	2x	2x	1.5x	3.6x (28-100mm equivalent)
Lens mount	EF/EF-S	EF	Fujifilm X mount	Nikon F mount	Micro Four Thirds	Micro Four Thirds	Pentax KAF2 mount	N/A
Shutter speeds	30-1/4000sec plus bulb	30 -1/8000 sec plus bulb	30-1/4000sec plus bulb up to 60 minutes	30 -1/8000sec plus bulb	60-1/4000sec plus bulb up to 30 minutes	60 -1/4000sec plus bulb up to 4 minutes	30-1/8000sec plus bulb	4-1/2000sec
ISO	100-12,800 (extendable to ISO 25,600)	100-1600 (extendable to ISO 50 and 3200)	200-6400 (extendable to ISO 100 and 25,600)	200-6400 (extendable to ISO 100 and 25,600)	200-25,600	100-3200	100-12,800 (extendable to ISO 80 and 51,200)	160-12,800 (extendable to ISO 100 and 25,600)
Metering system	TTL with 63-zone SPC	TTL with 35-zone SPC	TTL 256-zone metering	TTL using 1,005-pixel RGB sensor	TTL 324-zone multi- pattern	144-zone multi-pattern	TTL 77-point	Multi-pattern, centreweighted, spot
Exposure compensation	±5EV in 1/3 or 1/2 steps	±2EV in 1/3 or 1/2 steps	±2EV in 1/3 steps	±5EV in 1/3, 1/2 or full steps	±3EV in 1/3 , 1/2 or full steps	±3EV in 1/3 steps	±3EV in 1/3 or 1/2 steps	±3EV in 1/3 steps
Drive mode	4fps	3fps	6fps	5fps	9fps	3fps	7fps	10fps
LCD	3in TFT, 1.04 million dots	2.5in TFT, 230,000 dots	2.8in TFT, 460,000 dots	3in TFT, 920,000 dots	3in, 610,000-dot tilting OLED	3in TFT, 460,000 dots	3in TFT, 921,000 dots	3in TFT with 1.229 million dots
Viewfinder	Pentamirror	Pentaprism	2.36 million dot	Pentaprism	1.44 million dot	Optional electronic viewfinder	Pentaprism	Optional electronic viewfinder
AF points	9-point system	9-point system	TTL contrast AF	51-point system with 15 cross-type sensors	35-point system	23-point system	11-point system with 9 cross-type sensors	25-point system
Video	1,920x1,080 (30, 25, 24fps)	N/A	1,920x1,080 (24fps)	N/A	1,920x1,080	1,280x720	1,960x1,080 (25fps)	1,920x1,080 (60fps)
External mic	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memory card	SD, SDHC or SDXC (UHS-I)	CompactFlash (Type I or II)	SD, SDHC, SDXC	CompactFlash (Type I only)	SD, SDHC, SDXC	SD, SDHC, MMC	SD, SDHC	SD, SDHC, SDXC, MS Pro Duo
Power	Rechargeable Li-ion LP-E12	Rechargeable Li-Ion BP-511A	Rechargeable Li-Ion NP-W126	Rechargeable Li-Ion EN-EL3e	Rechargeable Li-Ion BLN-1	Rechargeable ,1250 mAh 7.2v Li-Ion	Rechargeable Li-ion D-LI90	Rechargeable Li-Ion NP-BX1
Dimensions	116.8x90.7x69.4mm	1152x113x75mm	129x74.9x38.3mm	147x123x77mm	122x89x43 mm	119x71x36.3mm	131x97x73mm	102x58x38mm
Weight	407g (with battery and memory card)	895g (with battery)	350g (with battery and memory card)	995g (without battery)	425g (with battery)	448g (with 20mm lens, card and battery)	740g (with battery and card)	281g (with battery)

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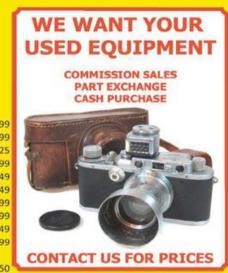


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Bag a bargain

Andy Westlake considers some of the pros and cons of buying lenses second-hand, and recommends a few of his favourites

'm pretty sure that the majority of photographers would love to buy their lenses brand new. Aside from the simple pleasure of taking a pristine new optic out of the box, buying new has several practical advantages. You get a nice long warranty for peace of mind if your lens goes wrong – up to five years in some cases – and you can be pretty sure nobody has dropped, damaged or maltreated your new toy.

Unfortunately, in the real world, buying everything new is beyond the reach of many, and considerable savings can be had from picking up used kit. This is especially the case with older or discontinued models, and while these may not be technically as good as ultra-sharp modern designs, many impressive lenses can be bought for a lot less than their current equivalents. When I was starting out in photography I bought almost all my lenses second-hand, and even now I

like a bargain as much as the next man.

Of course, there are potential pitfalls when buying used kit, especially in these days of buying privately online via the likes of eBay. You don't necessarily know for sure whether you're getting exactly what's shown or described, or even that it works perfectly. In my experience, the vast majority of sellers act in perfectly good faith, but some may not be telling the whole truth, and others simply don't know enough about what they're selling to give a completely accurate picture, especially if they're acting on behalf of a friend or relative.

To get the best chance of buying a lens in good condition, look out for lots of clear, high-resolution pictures showing a near-unblemished optic: this suggests the lens has been looked after well. Be wary of dented filter rings, a sure sign that the lens has been dropped. Make sure the glass is described as clean, otherwise there's a risk the seller is

trying to hide something. Minor scratches on the front element aren't usually a problem, but a lens with internal haze or fungus will likely require professional cleaning.

If all this sounds too much like hard work, you can always use a dealer. Sadly, there aren't as many camera shops around selling used equipment as there used to be, but you'll find a good selection in the back pages of *Amateur Photographer*. You may pay a bit more, but you should get a lens that's been checked over and works properly, along with the option of returning it if you decide you're not happy, and a warranty in case it goes wrong in the first few months of you owning it. For many people, these advantages, and the additional peace of mind, are well worth paying extra for.

In general, there are many more lenses on the market in DSLR mounts than there are for CSCs, simply because the systems have been around much longer. Because of this, we've concentrated on DSLR lenses for this article. All are from third-party makers, as these are often overlooked, and as such can prove to be even more of a bargain than the camera manufacturers' own lenses. They're also available in most major mounts.



Sigma 30mm f/1.4 EX DC HSM

• £150-£220

IN EARLY 2013 this lens was replaced by an all-new model in Sigma's 'Art' line, but the original 30mm f/1.4 is still a very fine lens. It uses a hypersonic motor for silent autofocus, with full-time manual override available at any time. As usual for Sigma's EX lenses, build quality is very good, and the lens is available for all DSLR systems.

The 30mm is the only third-party fast 'normal' prime for APS-C DSLRs, offering a 45mm equivalent angle of view. This gives a very natural perspective for everyday shooting, and the fast aperture is ideal for low light and shallow depth of field shooting.



Tokina AT-X Pro DX 12-24mm f/4

• £150-£250

TOKINA'S 12–24mm f/4 was one of the earliest wideangle zooms for APS–C DSLRs, and offers an 18–36mm equivalent angle of view (19–38mm on Canon DSLRs). It's an extremely solidly made lens that features a focus clutch mechanism, whereby pulling the focus ring towards the

camera engages manual mode. Nikon owners should note that only the later 'II' version has a built-in autofocus motor.

Tokina has a strong reputation for making wideangle zooms, and the 12–24mm is impressively sharp at all settings. Its main weakness is quite strong chromatic aberration that's visible across much of the frame, but this can be substantially removed in post–processing. The lens doesn't offer quite such a wide view as its rivals, but it's still much more expansive than a kit zoom.



Sigma 17-70mm f/2.8-4.5 DC Macro

• £90-£130

IF YOU'RE looking for a more versatile replacement for your DSLR's kit zoom, the Sigma 17–70mm f/2.8–4.5 DC may just be the ticket. With a 26–105mm equivalent range, the lens offers an unusually fast maximum aperture for its type, along with a usefully extended range compared to typical 18–55mm zooms. The minimum focus distance is just 20cm through the entire zoom range, allowing close–up shooting with a useful 0.43x magnification. Current prices make this lens an absolute bargain.

Nikon owners should be aware that the original 2006 model of this lens has no built-in autofocus motor, and look out for the later HSM version released in 2007.

A later iteration of this lens adds image stabilisation along with a faster f/4 maximum aperture at 70mm, but obviously this comes at a higher price. Both models are available in Canon, Nikon, Pentax, Sigma, and Sony Alpha mounts.

Tamron SP AF 17-50mm f/2.8 XR Di II LD Aspherical (IF)

• £100-£150

TAMRON'S classic fast normal zoom has been replaced by an image-stabilised version (at least in Canon and Nikon mounts), but it's still a great choice for owners of APS-C DSLRs looking for high-quality optics. The fast maximum aperture makes it especially useful for indoor or low-light shooting.

The 17–50mm was always a popular lens, and this means it's in plentiful supply on the second–hand market, which in turn keeps prices low. Nikon users should note that old models of the lens don't have a built–in autofocus motor, which is needed for AF on entry–level SLTs. This was added in the 2008 version (model A16NII).





Sigma 105mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro

• £150-£210

NOW REPLACED by an optically stabilised version, the older Sigma 105mm f/2.8 lens is still one of the best macro lenses that you can buy, and one that we have used in the AP studio to test cameras for a number of years.

The Sigma 105mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro is constructed of 11 elements in 10 groups, and its 460g body has a solid feel. Its minimum focus distance of 31cm provides a true 1:1 macro magnification, and a good working distance for any budding macro photographer.

Like the Tamron 90mm f/2.8 Macro featured on the opposite page, this lens features a focus clutch system whereby pulling the focus ring towards the camera engages manual focus. The lens barrel extends substantially during focusing, which means that autofocus isn't very fast compared to more modern macro lenses.

While the optical stabilisation and faster focusing of the new lens are useful, and at £330 it is really good value, if you get lucky you can find the previous 105mm f/2.8 macro lens for as little as half that price. In our tests we've found that at the aperture settings most commonly used for macro images, there is very little difference in sharpness between the old and new Sigma 105mm f/2.8 macro lenses.

Tokina AT-X Pro 50-135mm f/2.8 DX

• £190-£300

THE 50-135mm f/2.8 DX is a fast telephoto zoom for DSLRs with APS-C sensors, and offers a 75-200mm equivalent range. Like the similar Sigma 50-150mm f/2.8 EX DC HSM, it was designed to complement a fast normal zoom of the 16-50mm type, giving a much more portable alternative to a 70-200mm f/2.8 zoom. It combines good image quality with Tokina's usual bombproof build, and was made in Canon and Nikon mounts, with the latter lacking a built-in focus motor. The Pentax DA 50-135mm f/2.8 SDM is essentially the same design.

Perhaps surprisingly, this type of lens never really took off, despite its attractions, with photographers still preferring to buy 70-200mm optics. This means it's relatively scarce on the used market, and prices are still quite strong.





Sigma 12-24mm f/4-5-5.6 ÉX DG HSM

• £270-£350

WHEN it was launched, the Sigma 12-24mm f/4.5-5.6 had the distinction of being the widest rectilinear zoom lens ever made for full-frame cameras. It also offers a useful 18-36mm equivalent range on APS-C cameras, which makes it a particularly attractive option to photographers who use both formats, and a built-in HSM motor offers silent autofocus. However, weighing a hefty 600g, it's quite a bit bulkier than wideangle zooms specifically designed for the smaller sensor size.

The 12-24mm has since been replaced by an all-new 'II' version that includes updated optics to reduce distortion and chromatic aberration. Both models have built-in non-removable lens hoods to protect their bulbous front elements. A side effect of this is that it's not possible to use screw-in filters, but adapter rings are available for use with square filters such as the Lee system.

Tamron 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC PZD

• £150-£200

ALTHOUGH superzoom lenses can receive negative press for being jacks of all trades but masters of none, this shouldn't really be the case. While the image quality may not be able to match a shorter zoom, and definitely won't be as good as a fixed-focal-length lens, the convenience of having one tucked in your camera bag makes it ideal for travelling.

With an impressive 15x zoom, the Tamron 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC PZD is designed for APS-C-sensor DSLR cameras, giving the equivalent of a 27-400mm on full frame. With such a huge range, it can cover the vast majority of images that you would wish to take. Tamron's Vibration Control image stabilisation is particularly impressive, and is certainly needed when shooting at telephoto settings. It's a great general-purpose travel lens.



Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro HSM

• £300-£350

BEFORE its current imagestabilised model, Sigma made a long line of 70–200mm f/2.8 lenses, with four iterations starting from the first 1999 design. The first 'DG' update added coatings on the rear element for use with DSLRs, and the 2006 'Macro' version reduced the minimum focusing distance to 1m. A revised 2007 'HSM II' model featured improved optics.

All these lenses are available on the second-hand market, with the most recent model not surprisingly commanding the highest prices. The slightly older 'Macro' model represents good value, at around the £300 mark in good condition. If you're looking for a fast telephoto zoom on a budget, this lens is a great choice.



'Buying everything new is beyond the reach of many, and big savings can be had from picking up used kit'



Tamron 200-500mm f/4.5-6.3 SP AF Di (IF)

• £300-£400

IF YOU don't fancy the huge range of the Sigma 50–500mm lens (below), the Tamron 200–500mm f/4.5–6.3 is a good alternative. Like the Sigma 50–500mm, the Tamron 200–500mm lens lacks image stabilisation, although its simpler design means it weighs a little less at 1.24kg.

Another great choice for wildlife and sports photographers on a budget, the Tamron 200–50mm lens is available in Canon EF, Nikon F and Sony mounts. Although the lens is designed for full-frame sensors, it will obviously work on cameras with APS-C sensors, where it offers the equivalent of a 350–750mm lens. It is worth noting that due to the lack of a built-in focusing motor in the Nikon version, it will only work in manual-focus mode on entry-level Nikon DSLRs.



Sigma 50-500mm f/4.5-6.3 EX DG APO HSM

• £300-£500

NOW REPLACED by an optically stabilised version, the original Sigma 50-500mmm f/4.5-6.3 lens is a favourite among wildlife photographers. Like a superzoom lens, the 10x zoom lens may not produce images that can match the sharpness of a 300mm or a 70-200mm lens, but what it does provide is a lens that can cover most focal lengths that wildlife and sports photographers will want, especially if it is used on a DSLR with an APS-C-format sensor.

With 20 elements in 16 groups, and weighing a hefty 1.84kg, the lens has rightly earned the nickname 'The Bigma', and it has attained cult status among enthusiast wildlife photographers. The later version with optical stabilisation has obvious advantages, but the original version can be found at bargain prices, although demand for the different Sigma, Nikon, Canon, Sony and Pentax mounts means that prices can vary quite a lot.



Tamron SP AF 90mm f/2.8 Di Macro

• £130-£200

ANOTHER lens that has now been updated with optical stabilisation is Tamron's 90mm f/2.8 macro. However, the older Di version (Model 272E) is still considered something of a classic.

The Di version of the lens is a redesign of the classic 90mm macro lens produced by Tamron in the 1990s, featuring a new optical coating for sharper images with digital camera sensors. Compared to its Canon and Nikon equivalents it's a fairly compact, lightweight lens, but autofocus is relatively slow, with the barrel extending significantly at its 29cm minimum focus distance. Pulling the focus ring back towards the camera engages manual focus.

With excellent image sharpness and an equivalent field of view of 135mm on a DSLR with an APS-C sensor, this is one of the best macro lenses you can buy for DSLRs, and is available at a bargain price second-hand.



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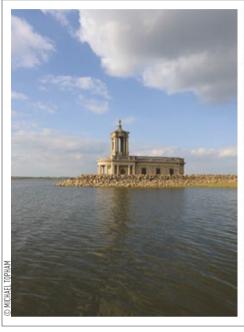
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Creative effects for free

I'm considering downloading the Nik Collection, which has recently been made available for free download by Google. Would you recommend it? **Brian Cox**

The Nik Collection comprises seven desktop plug-ins that provide a powerful range of photo-editing capabilities, from filter applications that improve colour correction, retouching and creative effects, to image sharpening and the ability to make adjustments to the colour and tonality of images. It's powerful software that is certainly worth the download for Silver Efex Pro alone, which offers darkroom-inspired control to those who'd like to create stunning black & white images (see left). It's also worth pointing out that anyone who purchased the Nik Collection in 2016 is entitled to a full refund.

Michael Topham

Fishing for a camera

I'm looking for a camera with a fully articulated screen, with an easy-to-use portrait setting for self-portraits when I'm fishing alone. I'm happy to consider a second-hand model, and have a budget of around £200. **Nick Mackey**

I'd suggest looking out for a Canon PowerShot G12, which you should be able to buy in good condition, boxed with all accessories, for well within your budget. Its 'smart shutter' mode lets you trigger the camera either by smiling at the camera, or by winking to trigger a short self-timer countdown, which could be useful when you have your hands full of fish. **Andy Westlake**

Canon bargain

I couldn't make it to the Photography Show this year, but in the past there have been some excellent discounts offered on the last day. A friend said the Canon EOS 5D Mark III was being sold at a rock-bottom prices. How much was it fetching at the show?

Andrew Betchworth

By the Monday afternoon, many retailers were selling the EOS 5D Mark III (body only) for £1,599, which included a double cashback deal that Canon offered exclusively to those who purchased the camera at the Photography Show. This represents a considerable saving

when you consider the current price of the camera (body only) is around £2,178, or £1,928, if you take advantage of Canon's current £250 cashback deal (redeemable before 18 June 2016).

The deal got even better on the last day, with Camera World and Calumet battling it out to offer the best price. On the Tuesday, the EOS 5D Mark III was available for £1,499 with double cashback included. You would have had to stump up £1,999, but after receiving £500 cashback from Canon, you'd be happy knowing you picked up a brand new EOS 5D Mark III for the lowest price it has ever fetched.

Michael Topham

Frozen film

A few years ago, when APS (Advantix) and 110 films were hard to come by, I put some in a sealed bag into my domestic freezer, for future nostalgic use.



Do you have any experience with frozen film, or information on a likely time that films can be kept in a freezer before they deteriorate excessively? I appreciate that 'excessively' depends on personal viewpoint, and individual freezer conditions will play a part, but any comments would be very useful.

I understand that they should be thawed slowly in a fridge before attempting to use them. **Keith Jones**

It's difficult to be definitive on this topic, because a number of variables can affect how long frozen film lasts. Also, there isn't a huge amount of reliable data available, simply because few people ever used to store film for very long periods of time, or systematically tested how different types of emulsions behaved. But in general, it seems fair to say that black & white film is more stable than dye-based colour emulsions, and fast film fogs faster than slow film. The main environmental variable is probably the natural background radiation, which varies from place to place.

Unfortunately, while many of us at AP have stored film in the fridge, none of us has taken to using the freezer. However, there's certainly anecdotal evidence that film can survive a decade or more when stored frozen in sealed packages, and still give perfectly good results. So chances are you'll probably be fine. Just be sure to thaw the film slowly before use, and develop it promptly once exposed.

Andy Westlake

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My life in cameras

Wildlife photographer Elliott Neep looks back at the cameras that have shaped his career

Elliott Neep



Elliott Neep is a photographer, guide and ardent conservationist. He has spent around ten years studying the natural world, has been featured in several publications and has won a variety of awards for his work. To see more, visit www.elliottneep.com

2002 Canon T90
Technically, this was my dad's camera (a gift from my brother who worked for Canon), but seeing as he wasn't using it, I 'acquired' it. It was outstanding!
Nicknamed The Tank, it was fast and

rugged, and had the most sophisticated metering of its time. I had only two FD lenses: a Tamron macro and a Canon 75-

200mm. I started teaching myself photography with this camera, and all my early work that sparked a love for nature photography was shot with this legendary body.

2005 (with grip)
Bought second-hand, this seemed the obvious progression from the T90. It was six frames per second, so I had to be careful about the potential wastage of film as

I was fairly skint at the time. The Canon EOS 3 marked a true development in my photography, with autofocus EF lenses opening up birds in flight and fast-moving mammals as potential camera fodder.



2003 Canon EOS 10D (with grip)
My first DSLR, bought just in

time for my second safari to India, was also the camera with which I captured my Wildlife Photographer of the Year image of two tigers leaping into a waterhole. The EOS 10D accelerated my learning curve with instantaneous results. By today's standards it

was slow, noisy above ISO 400 and had a resolution of just 6.3 million pixels. For me, the technological leap was all about speeding up that learning curve.



Nikon D3S
After a hateful time with the Canon EOS 7D, and being totally

underwhelmed by the EOS-1D Mark IV, I made the switch to Nikon. It was momentous! The D3S was phenomenal, with nine frames per second; it had a supremely dependable autofocus, unfailingly accurate

metering and outrageously low sensor noise.
Coupled with fast lenses, it opened up the twilight natural world, providing clean images at ISO 1,600 and even ISO 3,200.



2012 Nikon D800/D800E Marking a conscious step back from blazing frame rates, the D800 reflects a

shift in my photographic style, in which I have become far more selective and thoughtful. My lens selection moved away from being primarily telephoto to wideangle, photographing more

contextual and environmental scenes. The D800, with its colossal 36MP sensor, seemed like the logical transition – almost a halfway step to mediumformat territory.





BLAST FROM THE PAST

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Ivor Matanle recalls a great 1950s coupled rangefinder camera

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THE VOIGTLÄNDER VITO IIa of 1955 was a much-improved version of the first post-World War Two folding Vito II of 1949. This looked quite similar to the pre-war Vito, but had conventional 35mm sprocketed film transport, a coated Color-Skopar 50mm f/3.5 lens and vastly improved reliability.

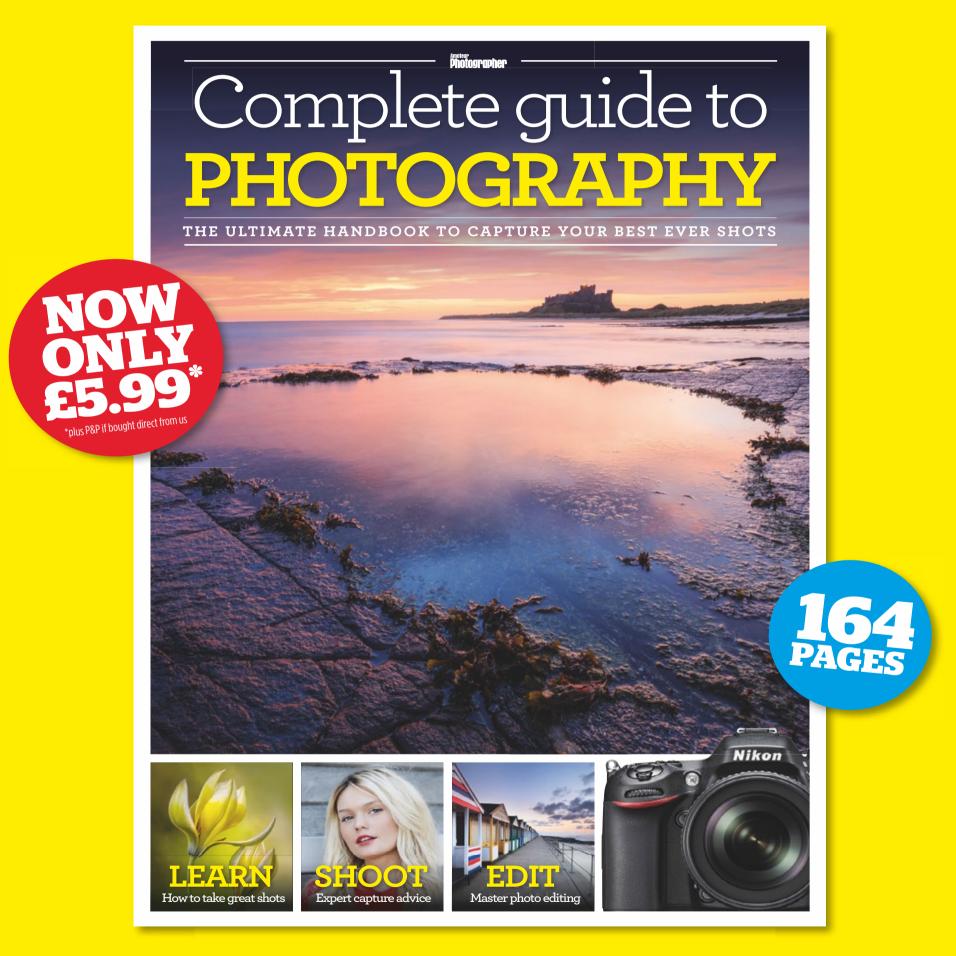
A 1950 version of this camera had a conventional shutter button instead of the bar on the door, and was available with a Compur Rapid or the Prontor S shutter. By 1954 it had an accessory shoe for a flashgun or rangefinder, and either a Prontor SV or Synchro Compur shutter.

The Vito IIa was an upgrade incorporating features of the hugely successful non-folding Vito B. It is a really nice compact, pocketable camera that is likely to be reliable, despite being more than 50 years old. With a coated Color-Skopar 50mm f/3.5 lens and either a Pronto or a Prontor SVS shutter, it is usually regarded as being the most desirable and reliable of the traditional folding Vitos.

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Professor Newman on...

Aggressive vs mild raw files

When it comes to converting your files, what's the difference between 'mild' and 'aggressive'?

A friend of mine suggested that I write this article (as his camera choices have inspired a couple of articles in the past, he deserves a credit – so thank you, Dr Iain Nicholl, for another good idea). Jain's guestion was about his raw converter, which allows him to select the level of raw conversion, between 'mild' and 'aggressive'. As with a lot of software, its functions are described by metaphor rather than precise functional specification, so the gist of the question was, what does 'mild' and aggressive' mean in terms of raw conversion? While I have no information on his particular manufacturer's rawconversion algorithms, I can comment in a general sense.

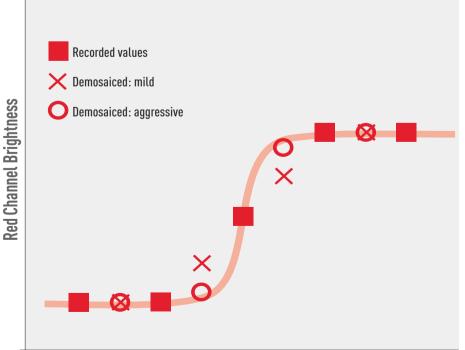
One of the major parts of converting a raw image is the process known as 'demosaicing'. Most digital cameras use a Bayer array sensor, in which individual sensor pixels may only detect red, green or blue light. In the output file, it is usually required to have

a red, green and blue value for each pixel. One way to produce this is simply to reduce the resolution by one half in each linear direction, leading to one quarter the number of pixels in the output image, where each output pixel's value is computed using a red, blue and two green pixels (thus resulting in a four to one pixel reduction). This can be a very good solution for modern digital photography in cases where the resolution of the output device is much smaller than that of the camera. For instance, highdefinition TV is only 2.1MP, so this simple demosaicing method would be fine for producing HDTV imagery from a camera with 8MP or above.

The problem arises when an output file is needed that has the same number of pixels as the camera sensor. Since each camera pixel only carries red,

or green, or blue information, the other two values (the green and blue values, for instance, if the camera pixel was a red one) must be estimated. The usual method for doing this is a process known as interpolation. Perhaps the easiest way to understand this is by reference to a graph as shown in the illustration (below). The red line represents the brightness of the red channel in our image. The solid squares represent the values of the red channel measured by the red pixels. To create a full-resolution image, we must interpolate the in-between values. One of the simplest ways of doing this is a 'linear' interpolation, where we simply take the average of the pixels either side, shown by the red crosses. This has produced a reasonable reconstruction, but the brightness step in the middle has become more of a slope than a step. If

'As with a lot of software, its functions are described by metaphor'



Pixel location

this was a sharp edge, now it's somewhat fuzzy.

More sophisticated demosaicing algorithms will take the slope (the derivative) of the line into account, or even the slope of the slope (the second derivative). This can produce a better result, shown by the red circles. The downside is that the slope can be perturbed by noise, causing false details in the image.

Returning to lain's question, in this model the simple linear interpolation is 'mild': it produces less apparent detail, but is not so susceptible to noise artefacts. The sophisticated, slopedependent algorithms are 'aggressive': they produce apparently sharper results, but may suffer from artefacts.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

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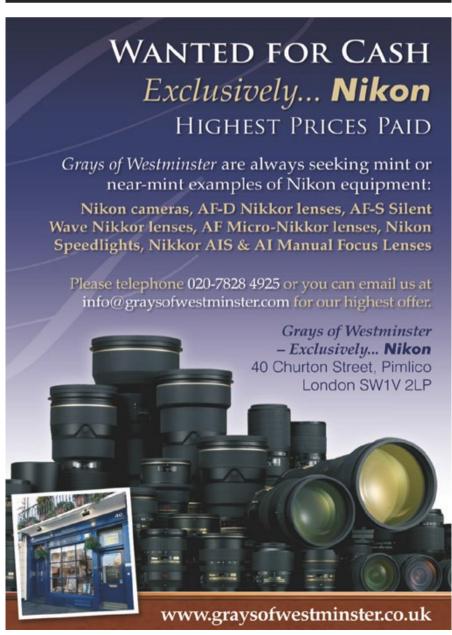
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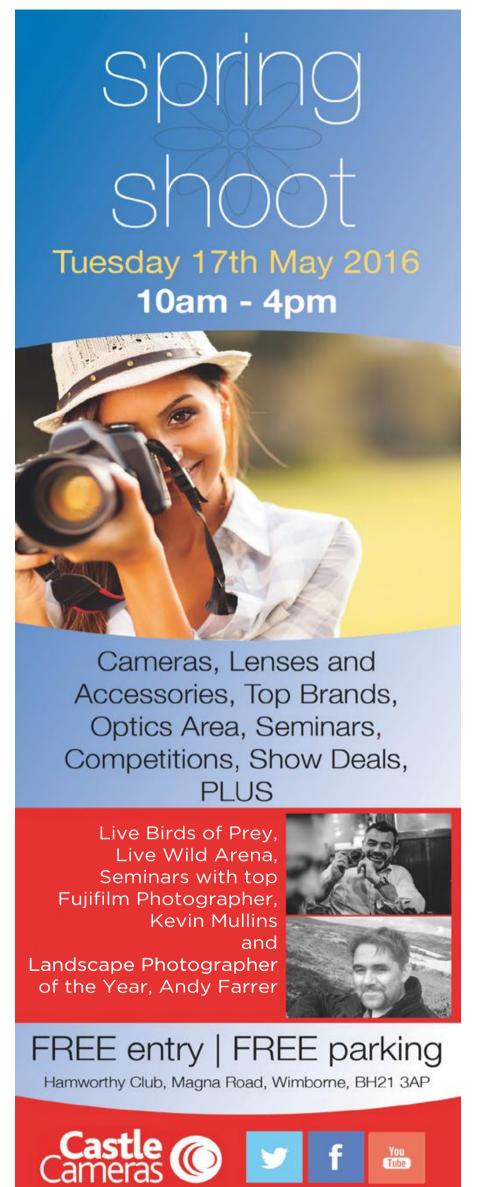
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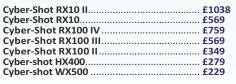


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Sigma 300mm F2.8 Apo	Unused £299
Sigma 300mm F2.8 Apo DG HSI	M E++ £1,299
Sigma 300mm F2.8 APO EX DG	F C4 F 40
HSME+ / E Sigma 300mm F4 ApoE+ / E	E++ £1,549
Sigma 400mm F5.6 AF	F+ £149 - £179
Sigma 400mm F5.6 Apo	E+ £79
Sigma 400mm F5.6 Apo Sigma 400mm F5.6 Apo Tele Ma	cro E+ £149
Sigma 500mm F4.5 Apo EX HSN	И E+ £1,749
Tamron 10-24mm F3.5-4.5 Di II I	
Asph E++ / M	lint-£249 - £259
Tamron 14mm F2.8 Asph (IF) AF Tamron 18-270mm F3.5-6.3 DI II	NC E+ £349
Tamron 19-35mm F3.5-4.5 AF	F++ £79
Tamron 24-135mm F3.5-5.6 Asp	h E++ £149
Tamron 28-75mm F2.8 XR Di AF	E++ £189
Tamron 28-300mm F3.5-6.3 XR	Di VC E++ £279
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Tamron 90mm F2.8 SP AF	0450 0040
MacroE+ / E Tamron 90mm F2.8 SP Di Macro	F++ £109 - £219
Tokina 10-17mm F3.5-4.5 DX	, Lii 2133
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Tokina 35mm F2.8 Macro DX AT	X E++ £249
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Tokina 300mm F2.8 ATX SD	E+ £599
Walimex 14mm F2.8 Pro Zeiss 21mm F2.8 ZE E++ / M	int- f699 - f710
Zeiss 28mm F2 ZE Exc /	E+ £399 - £479
1.4x EF Extender	E++ £119
2x EF ExtenderAs Seen / 2x EF II Extender	E++ £79 - £129
2x EF II Extender	Mint- £179
2x EF MkII ExtenderE+ / E Kenko 2x Converter Pro300	±++ £149 - £169
Nenko zx Converter Pro300	
270EX Speedlite	+ / F++ f0 - f20
380EX Speedlite	E+ £39
380EX SpeedliteE+	/ E++ £59 - £75
430EZ Speedlite E+	E+ / E++ £29
540EZ SpeedliteE+	/ E++ £29 - £49
550EX Speedlite	⊨+ £/9 - £109

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580EX MkII Speedlite	E++ £349 E++ £179 E++ £99 E+ £49 - £59 E++ £79 E++ £49 E++ £199 E++ £49 E+£219 - £279 lint-£59 - £79
Digital Compact Cameras Canon Ixus 900Ti Canon Powershot G12 Canon Powershot G3x Canon Powershot G9+ Housing & Flash Canon Powershot SX270 HS Canon Powershot SX270 HS Canon Powershot SX270 HS Canon Powershot SX40 HS Fuji Finepix HS10 Fuji Finepix S2950 Fuji Finepix S2950 Fuji Finepix S2950 Fuji Finepix SXP170 Fuji HS30EXR Leica Digilux 3 Body Only Nikon Coolpix A Nikon Coolpix A Nikon Coolpix L320 Nikon Coolpix L320 Nikon Coolpix L320 Nikon Coolpix L320 Nikon Coolpix P300 Panasonic DMC FZ48 Panasonic DMC FZ48 Panasonic DMC FZ60 Panasonic DMC FZ60 Panasonic DMC FZ18 Panasonic LX100 Ricoh GX100 + V/Finder Ricoh GXR + 28mm F2.5 Sigma DP2 Merrill Compact Compact Sony A6000 + 16-50mm Sony A6000 + 16-50mm Sony A6000 + 16-60mm	
Digital Mirrorless Fuji Finepix X-S1 Fuji Finepix X20 Fuji X-E1 Black Body Only Fuji X-E2 Silver Body Only Fuji X-M1 Silver Body Only Fuji X-Pro1 Body Only Ftyii X-Pro1 Body Only Ftyi	E++ £179 E++ £199 E++ £179 E++ £299 Mint- £149

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16-50mm F3.5-5.6 OIS XC E++ £109 - £12 18-55mm F2.8-4 XF

Sony NEX5 + 18-55mm	
Fuji X Lenses 16-50mm F3.5-5.6 OIS XC 18-55mm F2.8-4 XF 18mm F2 XF R 23mm F1.4 XF R 27mm F2.8 XF 55-200mm F3.5-4.8 OIS XF 60mm F2.4 XF R Macro Zeiss 12mm F2.8 Touit X Zeiss 32mm F1.8 Touit X	Mint- £279 E++ £179 E++ £469 E++ £169 Mint- £389 - £399 E++ £279 Mint- £589

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Olympus 8mm F3.5 FishEye Zuiko D. Mint- £349
Olympus 9-18mm F4-5.6 ÉD Zuiko E+ £229
Sigma 10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC
HSME+ / E++ £159 - £179
Olympus 11-22mm F2.8-3.5
Zuiko E+ / Mint- £219 - £269 Olympus 12-60mm F2.8-4 ED
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Olympus 14-35mm F2 SWD E++ £949
Panasonic 14-50mm F2.8-3.5 OIS
Asph E++ £149 Olympus 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 ZuikoE+ / E++
£129 - £189
Olympus 18-180mm F3.5-6.3
Zuiko
Olympus 35mm F3.5 Macro
ŽuikoE++ £79 - £129
Olympus 40-150mm F4-5.6 ED
ŽuikoE+ / E++ £39 - £49
Olympus 50-200mm F2.8-3.5 SWD E++ £449
Olympus 50-200mm F2.8-3.5 Zuiko E+ / E++
£249 - £369
Olympus 50mm F2 ED Macro Zuiko E++ £249
Sigma 70-200mm F2.8 Apo EX DG HSM
Olympus 70 200mm E4 5 6 ED Zuiko Mint £100
Olympus 70-300mm F4-5.6 ED Zuiko Mint- £199

Micro 4/3rds Lenses
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Olympus 12-50mm F3.5-6.3 M Zuiko E+ £139
Panasonic 12.5mm F12 G 3d E++ / Mint- £79
Olympus 12mm F2 ED M.
Zuiko E+ / Mint- £379 - £44
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Olympus 14-150mm F4-5.6 M.Zuiko
ÉD IIMint- £329
Panasonic 14-42mm F3.5-5.6 Asph OIS E++
Mint- £79

MINI- £79
Olympus 14-42mm F3.5-5.6 EZ
M.ZuikoMint- £129
Panasonic 14-45mm F3.5-5.6 ASPH G Vario Exc
/ E++ £89 - £129
Olympus 17mm F1.8 M.Zuiko Mint- £279
Olympus 17mm F2.8

M.Żuiko	E++ / Mint- £119 - £129
Sigma 19mm F2.8 DN	√Mint- £89
Voigtlander 25mm F0	.95 Nokton E+ £449
Olympus 25mm F1.8	M.Zuiko - Black Mint- £219
Olympus 40-150mm F	F2.8 M.
	Mint- £839 - £849
Panasonic 42 5mm F	1 2 Asph OIS Mint- £849

Panasonic 45-1/5mm F4-5.6 Asph Vario PZ
Mint- £179
Panasonic 45-200mm F4-5.6
OIS E++ £159 - £169
Olympus 45mm F1.8 M.Zuiko E++ £129
Panasonic 45mm F2.8 DG

Dlympus 75mm F1.8 ED Silver M.Zuiko E+
2499 - £539
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Body OnlyE+ / E++ £1,349 - £1,589
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Canon EOS 1D MKIIN Body Only As Seen £249

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á	Canon EOS 1D MkII
2	Body Only As Seen £149 - £199
9	Canon EOS 5D MKIII Body Only E+ /
2	Mint- £1.579 - £1.649
כ כ	Canon EOS 5D MkII Body Only As Seen £499
9	Canon EOS 5D + BG-E4 Grip As Seen / E++
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Black 7.4ml	£4.99
Colours 5.5ml each	£3.99
T0791-T0796	- O
Owl Inks	
Originals:	E 100
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Colours 11.1ml each
Compatibles:
Set of 6
Colours 11.1ml each T0801-T0806 Hummingbird Inks
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A4 25 sheets OFFE		A3 25 sheets	£
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6x4 100 sheets	£14.99	24" Roll 30 metres	£
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A4 25 sheets	£12,99	A4 25 sheets	£
A4 100 sheets	£39.99	A3 25 sheets	£4
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A3 25 sheets	£25.99	Oyster 271gsm:	
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	-11.00	17" Dall 20 base	

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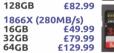
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52mm	£4.99	49mm	£10.99	49mm	£11.99
55mm	£5.99	52mm	£10.99	52mm	£11.99
58mm	£6.99	55mm	£11.99	58mm	£14.99
62mm	£7.99	58mm	£12.99	62mm	£16.99
67mm	£8.99	62mm	£14.99	67mm	£18.99
72mm	£9.99	67mm	£15.99	72mm	£21.99
77mm	£11.99	72mm	£17.99	77mm	£25.99
82mm	£14.99	77mm	£19.99	82mm	£29.99
86mm	£19.99	82mm	£22.99		
		M	IC C!!	HOYA Pro-1D Slim	
KOOD Slin		Marumi DHG Slim		Frame Multi-coated	
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46mm	£12.99	58mm	£15.99		£31.99
49mm	£12.99	62mm	£17.99	67mm	£35.99
52mm	£14.99	67mm	£19.99	72mm	£39.99
55mm	£15.99	72mm	£21.99	77mm SPECIAL	
58mm	£17.99	77mm	£24.99	82mm	£49.99
62mm	£19.99	Marumi Di	IC clim	HOVA Dec 41	0.61!
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KOOD		62mm	£39.99	62mm	£67.99
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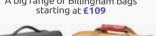








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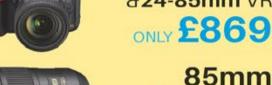


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FinalAnalysis

Roger Hicks considers... 'Mother watching her children as she prepares the evening meal,' 1942, by Gordon Parks

n today's political climate, the sheer glory of the Farm Security Administration is difficult to comprehend. American citizens were in trouble, so the American Government helped them. Almost incidentally, they sent out photographers to document the lives of ordinary people. Some were in dire poverty. Others, like this woman and her children, seem to have been living the American dream. Everything here speaks of a comfortable middle-class life - even in wartime and an era when segregation was still normal. Look at the clothes, the furnishings, the radio, the shiny saucepan.

Gordon Roger Alexander Buchanan Parks (1912-2006) was the youngest of 15 children. His mother died when he was 14 years old, and he ended up on the street at age 15. He had numerous jobs, including a spell as a piano player in a whorehouse. At age 25, he bought a Voigtländer Brilliant and, with the encouragement of the wife of boxer Joe Louis, opened a portrait business in Chicago, Illinois. From there, he moved to the Farm Security Administration. He then went over to Vogue as a fashion photographer, followed by *Life* magazine. Later, he would go on to direct *Shaft*, arguably the first blaxploitation movie. He was a genius.

Genius is, however, easier to spot than to define. What makes this picture so wonderful and saves it from being a snapshot? Well, for a start, it's technically brilliant. Balancing the light indoors and outdoors is never easy, and it's even more difficult when you're using multiple light sources. My guess is two bulb flashguns of different power: look at the shadows on the curtains and beneath the cupboard, and behind the power cord to the radio, then look at the highlights on the woman's hair and left arm and the seat of the chair.

Light is used compositionally, too: darkness rising to light. The way that the curtains are lighter than the sky is improbable, but we don't notice it until we start looking at the picture closely—too closely, perhaps, the way a mediocre camera club judge might analyse it. Overall the tonality is gorgeous, probably the result of generous exposure.



'The pose is wonderfully natural, but few would dream of taking a picture of the back of the principal subject's head'

Then there's the pose: it is wonderfully natural, but few would dream of taking a picture of the back of the principal subject's head. I suspect that the left-hand curtain has also been adjusted, either to cover up something distracting in the outside scene or simply to focus more attention on the children. I've already

mentioned some of the 'props', the evidence of affluence, but there is more: the glasses in their holder, the lace doily, the presence of both curtains and drapes. In short, it's a typical example of an 'I could do that' picture where, actually, everything is just that little bit more difficult than it looks.

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his new website at **www.rogerandfrances.eu**). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. **Next week he considers an image by Marilyn Silverstone**

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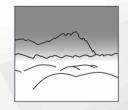
Iceland's intense terrain of volcanic rock, savage mountains, glaciers and malevolently active volcanoes are an exciting challenge to the adventurous, and an irresistible attraction for contemporary landscape photographers.

This terrain is a visual challenge too. The darkness of the volcanic geology, combined with brilliant white snow and ice in marginal lighting can make contrast management quite a headache.

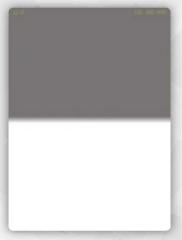
In many circumstances, neutral density graduates can ride to the rescue; this photograph from Stokksnes illustrates an unorthodox application, with the 0.6 ND graduated filter (two stops) positioned lower than you might think. The sun was fading behind western cloud banks, yet the snow on the side of Vestrahorn remained bright, brighter than all but the breaks in the cloud behind the mountain. Full filter density covers the jagged profile of the mountain; the graduation zone begins at the foot of the snow and extends over the dunes in the distance. The filter is clear in front of the foreground dune grasses.

Put simply, the filter is half way down.

Even with a hard graduate, careful positioning of the filter (especially with high quality truly neutral filters) can produce a seamless, 'invisible' effect. It helps represent the scene in a way that emulates the way the brain maps it, with good tone and detail throughout.



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